



M^{rs} ELIZA HAYWOOD.

Parmentier pinx.

Gertue Sculp.



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SECRET
HISTORIES,
NOVELS,
AND
POEMS.

IN FOUR VOLUMES.

Written by Mrs. ELIZA HAYWOOD.

VOL. I.

—Go, and to the World impart
The faithful Image of an am'rous Heart :
Those who Love's dear, deluding Pains have known,
May in my fatal Stories read their own.
Those who have liv'd from all its Torments free,
May find the Thing they never felt, by me :
Perhaps advis'd, avoid the gilded Bait,
And, warn'd by my Example, shun my Fate.
WALSH.

THE FOURTH EDITION.

L O N D O N :

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LOVE in EXCESS:

OR, THE

FATAL ENQUIRY.

A

NOVEL.

IN THREE PARTS.

By Mrs. ELIZA HAYWOOD.

——— *In vain from Fate we fly,
For first or last, as all must die;
So 'tis as much decreed Above,
That first or last, we all must love.*

LANSDOWNE.

THE EIGHTH EDITION.





T O

Mrs. *Eliza Haywood*,

O N H E R

N O V E L

C A L L ' D

LOVE in Excess, &c.

*F*AIN wou'd I here my vast Ideas raise,
 To point the Wonders of Eliza's Praise;
 But like young Artists, were their Stroaks decay,
 I shade those Glories, which I can't display.
 Thy Prose in sweeter Harmony refines,
 Than Numbers flowing thro' the Muse's Lines;
 What Beauty ne'er cou'd melt, thy Touches fire,
 And raise a Musick that can Love inspire;
 Soul-thrilling Accents all our Senses wound,
 And strike with Softness, whilst they charm with
 Sound!

When thy Count pleads, what Fair his Suit can fly?
 Or when thy Nymph laments, what Eyes are dry?
 Ev'n

6 VERSES to Mrs. HAYWOOD.

*Ev'n Nature's self in Sympathy appears,
Yields Sigh for Sigh, and melts in equal Tears;
For such Description thus at once can prove
The Force of Language, and the Sweets of Love.*

*The Myrtle's Leaves with those of Fame entwine,
And all the Glories of the Wreath are thine?
As Eagles can undazzl'd view the Force
Of scorching Phcebus in his Noon-day Course;
Thy Genius to the God its Lustre plays,
Meets his fierce Beams, and darts him Rays for Rays!
Oh glorious Strength! Let each succeeding Page
Still boast those Charms, and luminate the Age;
So shall thy beamful Fires, with Light divine,
Rise to the Sphere, and there triumphant shine.*

RICHARD SAVAGE.



By



By an unknown HAND.

To the most Ingenious Mrs. HAYWOOD,
on her NOVEL, entitled,

LOVE in EXCESS.

A Stranger Muse, an Unbeliever too,
That Womens Souls such Strength of Vigor knew,
Nor less an Atheist to Love's Power declar'd,
Till You a Champion for the Sex appear'd:
A Convert now, to both, I feel that Fire
YOUR Words alone can paint! YOUR Looks inspire!
Resistless now, Love's Shafts new-pointed fly.
Wing'd with YOUR Flame, and blazing in YOUR Eye;
With sweet, but pow'rful Force, the Charm-shot
Heart
Receives th' Impression of the conqu'ring Dart,
And ev'ry Art'ry hugs the Joy-tipt Smart!

No more of Phœbus' rising vainly boast,
Ye tawny Sons of a luxurious Coast!
While our blest Isle is with such Rays replete,
Britain shall glow with more than Eastern Heat!

VERSES



VERSES wrote in the Blank Leaf of
Mrs. Haywood's NOVEL.

OF all the Passions giv'n us from above,
The noblest, truest, and the best, is Love ;
'Tis Love awakes the Soul, informs the Mind,
And bends the stubborn Temper to be kind ;
Abates the Edge of every poi'nant Care,
Succeeds the Wishes of the trembling Fair,
And ravishes the Lover from Despair. }
'Tis Love Eliza's soft Affection fires,
Eliza writes, but Love alone inspires ;
'Tis Love that gives D'Elmont his manly Charms,
And tears Amena from her Father's Arms ;
Relieves the Fair-One from her Maiden Fear, }
And gives Melliora all her Soul holds dear,
A generous Lover, and a Bliss sincere. }

Receive, my Fair, the Story, and approve
The Cause of Honour, and the Cause of Love ;
With kind Concern, the tender Page peruse,
And all the infant Labours of the Muse.
So never may those Eyes forget to shine,
And bright Melliora's Fortune be as thine ;
On thy best Looks, an happy D'Elmont feed,
And all the Wishes of thy Soul succeed.



LOVE in EXCESS:

OR, THE

FATAL ENQUIRY.

PART the FIRST.

N the late War between the *French* and the *Confederate* Armies, there were two *Brothers*, who had acquir'd a more than ordinary Reputation, under the Command of the great and intrepid *Luxembourg*. But the Conclusion of the Peace taking away any further Occasions of shewing their Valour, the Eldest of 'em, whose Name was Count *D'Elmont*, return'd to *Paris*, from whence he had been absent two Years, leaving his Brother at *St. Omers*, 'till the Cure of some slight Wounds were perfected.

THE Fame of the Count's brave Actions arriv'd before him; and he had the Satisfaction of being receiv'd

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B

ceiv'd by the King and Court, after a Manner that might gratify the Ambition of the proudest. The Beauty of his Person, the Gaiety of his Air, and the unequal'd Charms of his Conversation, made him the Admiration of both Sexes; and whilst those of his *own* strove who should gain the largest Share in his Friendship; the *other* vented fruitless Wishes, and in secret curs'd that Custom which forbids Women to make a Declaration of their Thoughts. Amongst the Number of these, was *Alovisa*, a Lady descended (by the Father's Side) from the Noble Family of the *D'la Tours*, formerly Lord of *Bujey*, and (by her Mother's) from the equally Illustrious House of *Montmorency*. The late Death of her Parents had left her Coheiress (with her Sister) of a vast Estate.

IF her Passion was not greater than the rest, her Pride and the good Opinion she had of herself, made her the less able to support it; she sigh'd, she burn'd, she rag'd, when she perceiv'd the charming *D'Elmont* behav'd himself toward her with no Mark of a distinguishing Affection. What (said she) have I beheld without Concern a Thousand Lovers at my Feet, and shall the only Man I ever endeavour'd, or wish'd to charm, regard me with Indifference? Wherefore has the agreeing World join'd with my deceitful Glass to flatter me into a vain Belief I had invincible Attractions? *D'Elmont* sees 'em not; *D'Elmont* is insensible! Then would she fall into Ravings, sometimes cursing her own Want of Power, sometimes the Coldness of *D'Elmont*. Many Days she pass'd in these Inquietudes, and every time she saw him (which was very frequently) either at Court, at Church, or publick Meetings, she found fresh Matter for her troubled Thoughts to work upon: When on any Occasion he happened to speak to her, it was with that Softness in his Eyes, and that engaging Tenderness in his Voice, as would half persuade

persuade her, that the same God had touch'd his Heart, which so powerfully had influenced hers; but if a glimmering of such a Hope gave her a Pleasure inconceivable, how great were the ensuing Torments, when she observ'd those Looks and Accents were but the Effects of his natural Complaisance, and that to whomsoever he address'd, he carried an Equality in his Behaviour, which sufficiently evinc'd, his Hour was not yet come to feel those Pains he gave; and if the afflicted Fair Ones found any Consolation, it was in the Reflection, that no triumphant Rival could boast a Conquest, each now despair'd of gaining. But the impatient *Alovisa* disdain'd to be rank'd with those, whom her Vanity made her consider as infinitely her Inferiors, suffer'd herself to be agitated almost to Madness, between the two Extrems of Love and Indignation; a thousand Chimera's came into her Head, and sometimes prompted her to discover the Sentiments she had in his Favour: But these Resolutions were rejected almost as soon as form'd, and she could not fix on any for a long Time; 'till at last, Love (ingenious in Invention) inspir'd her with one, which probably might let her into the Secrets of his Heart, without the Shame of revealing her own.

THE Celebration of Madam the Dutchess of *Burgundy's* Birth-day being to be solemnized with great Magnificence, she writ this Billet to him on the Night before.



TO Count D'ELMONT.

RESISTLESS as you are in War, you are much more so in Love: Here you conquer without making an Attack, and we surrender before you summons; the Law of Arms obliges you to shew Mercy to a yielding Enemy, and sure the Court cannot inspire less generous Sentiments than the Field. The little God lays down his Arrows at your Feet, confesses your superior Power, and begs a friendly Treatment; he will appear to you To-morrow Night at the Ball, in the Eyes of the most passionate of all his Votresses; search therefore for him in Her, in whom (amongst that bright Assembly) you would most desire to find him; I am confident you have too much Penetration to miss of him, if not byass'd by a former Inclination; and in that Hope, I shall (as patiently as my Expectations will let me) support, till then, the tedious Hours.

Farewell.

THIS she sent by a trusty Servant, and so disguis'd, that it was impossible for him to be known, with a strict Charge to deliver it into the Count's own Hands, and come away before he had read it. The Fellow perform'd her Orders exactly; and when the Count, who was not a little surpriz'd at the first opening it, ask'd for the Messenger, and commanded he should be stay'd; his Gentleman (who was then waiting in his Chamber) told him he ran down Stairs with all the Speed imaginable, immediately on his Lordship's receiving it.

D'Elmont

D'Elmont having never experienc'd the Force of Love, could not presently comprehend the Truth of this Adventure: at first he imagin'd some of his Companions had caus'd this Letter to be wrote, either to sound his Inclinations, or upbraid his little Disposition to Gallantry, but these Cogitations soon gave Place to others; and tho' he was not very vain, yet he found it no Difficulty to persuade himself to an Opinion, that it was possible for a Lady to distinguish him from other Men. Nor did he find any thing so unpleasing in that Thought as might make him endeavour to repel it; the more he consider'd his own Perfections, the more he was confirm'd in his Belief, but who to fix it on, he was at a Loss as much as ever; then he began to reflect on all the Discourse and little Raileries that had pass'd between him and the Ladies whom he had convers'd with since his Arrival, but could find nothing in any of 'em of Consequence enough to make him guess at the Person; he spent great Part of the Night in Thoughts very different from those he was accusom'd to; the Joy which naturally arises from the Knowledge 'tis in one's Power to bestow it, gave him Notions which till then he was a stranger to; he began to consider a Mistress as an agreeable as well as fashionable Amusement, and resolv'd not to be cruel.

In the mean time poor *Alovisa* was in all the Anxiety imaginable; she counted every Hour, and thought 'em Ages, and at the first Dawn of Day she rose, and calling up her Women, who were amaz'd to find her so uneasy, she employ'd 'em in placing her Jewels on her Cloaths to the best Advantage, while she consulted her Glass after what Manner she should dress her Eyes; the gay, the languishing, the sedate, the commanding, the beseeching Air, were put on a thousand times, and as often rejected; and she had scarce deter-

min'd which to make use of, when her Page brought her Word, some Ladies who were going to Court desir'd her to accompany them: She was too impatient not to be willing to be one of the first, so went with them immediately, arm'd with all her Lightnings, but full of unsettled Reflections. She had not been long in the Drawing-Room before it grew very full of Company, but *D'Elmont* not being amongst 'em she had her Eyes fixed towards the Door, expecting every Moment to see him enter; but how impossible is it to represent her Confusion, when he appear'd, leading the young *Amena*, Daughter to Monsieur *Sanseverin*, a Gentleman, who tho' he had a very small Estate and many Children, had by a partial Indulgence, too common among Parents, neglecting the rest, maintain'd this Darling of his Heart in all the Pomp of Quality. The Beauty and Sweetness of this Lady was present Death to *Alonisa's* Hopes; she saw, or fancy'd she saw, an unusual Joy in her Eyes, and dying Love in his; Disdain, Despair, and Jealousy at once crowded into her Heart, and swell'd her almost to bursting; and 'twas no Wonder that the Violence of such terrible Emotions kept her from regarding the Discourses of those who stood by her, or the Devoirs that *D'Elmont* made as he pass'd by, and at length threw her into a Swoon; the Ladies ran to her Assistance, and her charming Rival, being one of her particular Acquaintance, shew'd an extraordinary Assiduity in applying Means for her Relief; they made what Haste they could to get her into another Room and unfasten her Robe, but were a great while before they could bring her to herself; and when they did, the Shame of having been so disorder'd in such an Assembly, and the Fears of their suspecting the Occasion, added to her former Agonies, and rack'd her with most terrible Revulsions, every one now despairing of her being able to assist at
that

that Night's Entertainment, she was put into her Chair, in order to be carried home: *Amena*, who little thought how unwelcome she was grown, would needs have one call'd, and accompany'd her thither, in spite of the Intreaties of *D'Elmont*, who had before engag'd her for his Partner in dancing; not that he was in Love with her, or at that time believ'd he could be touch'd with a Passion which he esteem'd a Trifle in itself, and below the Dignity of a Man of Sense; but Fortune (to whom this Lady, no less enamour'd than *Alovisa*, had made a thousand Invocations) seem'd to have allotted her the Glory of his first Addressee; she was getting out of her Chariot just as he alighted from his, and offering her his Hand, he perceiv'd hers trembled; which engaging him to look upon her more earnestly than he was wont, he immediately fancy'd he saw something of that Languishment in her Eyes, which the obliging Mandate had describ'd. *Amena* was too lovely to make that Belief disagreeable, and he resolv'd on the Beginnings of an Amour, without giving himself the Trouble of considering the Consequences; the Evening being extremely pleasant, he ask'd if she would not favour him so far as to take a Turn or two with him in the Palace-Garden; she, who desir'd nothing more than such a particular Conversation, was not at all backward of complying; he talk'd to her there for some time, in a manner as could leave her no Room to doubt he was entirely charm'd; and 'twas the Air such an Entertainment had left on both their Faces, as produc'd those sad Effects on the jealous *Alovisa*. She was no sooner led to her Apartment, but she desired to be put to Bed, and the good-natur'd *Amena*, who really had a very great Kindness for her, offer'd to quit the Diversions of the Ball, and stay with her all-Night; but the unfortunate *Alovisa* was not in a Condition to endure the Presence of any, especially

cially her, so put her off as civilly as her Anxiety would give her leave, chusing rather to suffer her to return to the Ball, than retain so hateful an Object (as she was now become) in her Sight; and 'tis likely the other was not much troubled at her Refusal. But how (when left alone, and abandon'd to the Whirlwinds of her Passion) the desperate *Alovisa* behav'd, none but those who, like her have burn'd in hopeless Fires, can guess; the most lively Description would come far short of what she felt; she rav'd, she tore her Hair and Face, and in the Extremity of her Anguish was ready to lay violent Hands on her own Life. In this Tempest of Mind she continu'd for some time, till at length Rage beginning to dissipate itself in Tears, made way for cooler Considerations; and her natural Vanity resuming its Empire in her Soul, was of no little Service to her on this Occasion. Why am I thus disturb'd? Mean spirited as I am! said she. *D'Elmont* is ignorant of the Sentiments I am possess'd with in his Favour; and perhaps 'tis only Want of Encouragement that has so long depriv'd me of my Lover: my Letter bore no certain Mark by which he might distinguish me, and who knows what Arts that Creature might make Use of to allure him? I will therefore (pursued she, with a more chearful Countenance) direct his erring Search. As she was in this Thought (happily for her, who else might have relaps'd) her Women, who were waiting in the next Room, came in to know if she wanted any thing; Yes, (answer'd she, with a Voice and Eyes wholly chang'd) I'll rise; one of you help me on with my Cloaths, and let the other send *Charlo* to me, I have instant Business with him. 'Twas in vain for 'em to represent to her the Prejudice it might be to her Health to get out of her Bed at so unseasonable an Hour, it being then just Midnight; they knew her too absolute a Mistress not to be obey'd, and executed her

her Commands without disputing the Reason. She was no sooner ready, than *Charlo* was introduced, who being the same Person that carry'd the Letter to *D'Elmont*, guess'd what Affair he was to be concern'd in, and shut the Door after him. I commend your Caution, said his Lady; for what I am now going to trust you with, is of more Concernment than my Life. The Fellow bow'd, and made a thousand Protestations of an eternal Fidelity. I doubt it not, resum'd she; go then immediately to the Court, 'tis not impossible but in this Hurry you may get into the Drawing Room; but if not, make some Pretence to stay as near as you can 'till the Ball be over; listen carefully to all Discourses where you hear Count *D'Elmont* mentioned; enquire who he dances with, and, above all, watch what Company he comes out with, and bring me an exact Account. Go, continu'd she hastily, these are all the Orders I have for you to Night, but To-morrow I shall employ you farther. Then turning to her *Escritore*, she sat down, and began to prepare a second Letter, which she hop'd would be more lucky than the former. She was not long writing, Love and Wit suggested a World of passionate and agreeable Expressions to her in a Moment: But when she had finish'd this so full a Discovery of her Heart, and was about to sign her Name to it, not all that Passion which had inspir'd her with a Resolution to scruple nothing that might advance the compassing her Wishes, nor the Vanity which assur'd her of Success, were forcible enough to withstand the Shock it gave her Pride: No, let me rather die! said she (starting up and frighted at her own Designs) than be guilty of a Meanness which wou'd render me unworthy of Life: Oh Heavens! to offer Love, and poorly sue for Pity! 'tis insupportable! What bewitch'd me to harbour such a Thought, as even the vilest of my Sex would blush

at! To Pieces then (added she, tearing the Paper) with this shameful Witness of my Folly, my furious Desires may be the Destruction of my Peace, but never of my Honour; that shall still attend my Name when Love and Life are fled. She continu'd in this Temper (without being able to compose herself to Rest) till Day began to appear, and *Charlo* return'd with News which confirm'd her most dreaded Suspicions. He told her that he had gain'd Admittance to the Drawing-Room several times, under Pretence of delivering Messages to some of the Ladies; that the whole Talk among 'em was, that *D'Elmont* was no longer insensible of Beauty; that he observ'd that Gentleman in very particular Conference with *Amena*, and that he waited on her home in his Chariot, her own not being in the way: I knew it, said *Alovisa*, walking about in a disorder'd Motion) I did not doubt but that I was undone, and to my other Miseries, have that of being aiding to my Rival's Happiness: Whatever his Desires were, he carefully conceal'd 'em till my curst Letter prompted a Discovery; tenacious as I was, and too, too confident of this little Beauty! Here she stopp'd, and wiping away some Tears, which in spite of her ran down her Cheeks, gave *Charlo* leave to ask if she had any more Commands for him. Yes (answer'd she) I will write once more to this undiscerning Man, and let him know, 'tis not *Amena* that is worthy of him; that I may do without prejudicing my Fame, and 'twill be at least some Easement to my Mind, to undeceive the Opinion he may have conceiv'd of her Wit, for I am almost confident she passes for the Authoress of those Lines which have been so fatal to me. In speaking this, without any further Thought, she once more took her Pen, and wrote these Words.

To



To Count D'ELMONT.

IF Ambition be a Fault, 'tis only in those who have not a sufficient Stock of Merit to support it; too much Humility is a greater in you, whose Person and Qualities are too admirable, not to render any Attempt you shall make justifiable, as well as successful. Heaven when it distinguished you in so particular a Manner from the Rest of Mankind, design'd you not for vulgar Conquests; and you cannot without a manifest Contradiction to its Will, and an irreparable Injury to yourself, make a Present of that Heart to Amena, when one of at least an equal Beauty, and far superior in every other Consideration, would sacrifice all to purchase the glorious Trophy; continue then no longer in a wilful Ignorance, aim at a more exalted Flight, and you will find it no Difficulty to discover who she is that languishes, and almost dies for an Opportunity of confessing (without too great a Breach of Modesty) that her Soul, and all the Faculties of it, are, and must be,

Eternally Yours.

THIS she gave to *Charlo*, to deliver with the same Caution as the former; but he was scarce got out of the House before a new Fear assaulted her, and she repented her Uncircumspection. What have I done! cry'd she? Who knows but *D'Elmont* may shew these Letters to *Amena*, she is perfectly acquainted with my Hand, and I shall be the most expos'd and wretched Woman in the World. Thus industrious was she in forming Notions to torment herself; nor indeed was there any thing of Improbability in this Con-

jecture. There are too many ungenerous enough to boast such an Adventure; but *D'Elmont*, tho' he would have given good Part of his Estate to satisfy his Curiosity, yet chose rather to remain in a perpetual Ignorance, than make use of any means that might be disadvantageous to the Lady's Reputation. He now perceiv'd his Mistake, and that it was not *Amena* who had taken that Method to engage him, and possibly was not disgusted to find she had a Rival of such Merit, as the Letter intimated. However, he had said too many fine Things to her to be lost, and thought it as inconsistent with his Honour as his Inclination, to desist a Pursuit in which he had all the Reason in the World to assure himself of Victory; for the young *Amena* (little vers'd in the Art of Dissimulation, so necessary to her Sex) cou'd not conceal the Pleasure she took in his addresses, and without even a seeming Reluctancy, had given him a Promise of meeting him the next Day in the *Tuilleries*; nor could all his unknown Mistress had writ, persuade him to miss this Assignment, nor let that be succeeded with another, and that by a third, and so on, 'till by making a Shew of Tenderness, he began to fancy himself really touch'd with a Passion he only design'd to represent. 'Tis certain this Way of Fooling rais'd Desires in him, little different from what is commonly call'd Love; and made him redouble his Attacks in such a Manner, as *Amena* stood in need of all her Virtue to resist; but as much as she thought herself oblig'd to resent such Attempts, yet he knew so well how to excuse himself, and lay the Blame on the Violence, of his Passion, that he was still too charming and dear to her, not to be forgiven. Thus was *Amena* (by her too generous and open Temper) brought to the very Brink of Ruin, and *D'Elmont* was possibly contriving means to compleat it, when her Page brought him this Letter.

To



TO COUNT D'ELMONT.

SOME malicious Persons have endeavour'd to make the little Conversation I have had with you, appear as criminal; therefore to put a Stop to all such Aspersions, I must for the future deny myself the Honour of your Visits, unless commanded to receive 'em by my Father, who only has the Power of disposing of

AMENA.

THE Consternation he was in at the reading these Lines, so very different from her former Behaviour, is more easily imagin'd than express'd; 'till casting his Eyes on the Ground, he saw a small Note, which in the opening of this, had fallen out of it, which he hastily took up, and found it contain'd these Words.

I guess the Surprise my lovely Friend is in, but have not time now to unriddle the Mystery: I beg you will be at your Lodgings towards the Evening, and I will invent a Way to send to you.

'Twas now that D'Elmont began to find there were Embarrassments in an Intrigue of this Nature, which he had not foreseen, and stay'd at Home all Day, impatiently expecting the clearing of an Affair, which at present seem'd so ambiguous. When it grew a little duskish, his Gentleman brought in a young Woman, whom he immediately knew to be *Anaret*, an Attendant on *Amena*; and when he had made her sit down, told

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told her he hop'd she was come to make an *Eclaircissement*, which would be very obliging to him, and therefore desired she would not defer it.

My Lord, said she, 'tis with an unspeakable Trouble I discharge that Trust my Lady has repos'd in me, in giving you a Relation of her Misfortunes; but not to keep you longer in suspense, which I perceive is uneasy to you, I shall acquaint you, that soon after you were gone, my Lady came up into her Chamber, where, as I was preparing to undress her, we heard Monsieur *Sanseverin* in an angry Tone, ask where his Daughter was, and being told she was above, we immediately saw him enter, with a Countenance so inflam'd, as put us both in a mortal Apprehension. An ill Use (said he to her) have you made of my indulgence; and the Liberty I have allow'd you! Could neither the Considerations of the Honour of your Family, your own Reputation, nor my eternal Repose, deter you from such imprudent Actions, as you cannot be ignorant must be the inevitable Ruin of 'em all? My poor Lady was too much surpriz'd at these cruel Words, to be able to make any Answer to 'em, and stood trembling, and almost fainting, while he went on with his Discourse. Was it consistent with the Niceties of your Sex, said he, or with the Duty you owe me, to receive the Addresses of a Person whose Pretensions I was a Stranger to? If the Count *D'Elmont* has any that are honourable, wherefore are they conceal'd? The Count *D'Elmont*! (cry'd my Lady, more frightened than before) never made any Declarations to me worthy of your Knowledge, nor did I ever entertain him otherwise, than might become your Daughter. 'Tis false (interrupted he furiously) I am but too well inform'd of the contrary; nor has the most private of your shamefull Meetings escap'd my Ears!

Ears! Judge, Sir, what a Confusion my Lady was in at this Discourse; 'twas in vain she must'rd all her Courage to persuade him from giving Credit to an Intelligence so injurious to her; he grew the more enraged, and after a thousand Reproaches, flung out of the Room with all the Marks of a most violent Indignation; but tho' your Lordship is too well acquainted with the Mildness of *Amena's* Disposition, not to believe she could bear the Displeasure of a Father (who had always most tenderly loved her) with Indifference; yet 'tis impossible for you to imagine in what an Excess of Sorrow she was plunged; she found every Passage of her ill Conduct (as she was pleased to call it) was betray'd, and did not doubt but whoever had done her that ill Office to her Father, wou'd take care the Discovery shou'd not be confin'd to him alone. Grief, Fear, Remorse, and Shame by turns assaulted her, and made her incapable of Consolation; even the soft Pleas of Love were silenc'd by their tumultuous Clamours, and for a time she consider'd your Lordship in no other view than that of her Undoer. How! cry'd *D'Elmont* (interrupting her) cou'd my *Amena*, who I thought all Sweetness, judge so harshly of me? Oh! my Lord, resum'd *Anaret*, you must forgive those first Emotions, which as violent as they were, wanted but your Presence to dissipate in a Moment; and if your Idea had not presently that Power, it lost no Honour by having Roes to struggle with, since at last it put 'em all to flight, and gain'd so entire a Victory, that before Morning, of all her Troubles, scarce any but the Fears of losing you remain'd: And I must take the Liberty to assure your Lordship, my Endeavours were not wanting to establish a Resolution in her to despise every thing for Love and You. But to be as brief as I can in my Relation; the Night was no sooner gone, than Monsieur her Father came into

into the Chamber, with a Countenance more compos'd than that with which he left us, yet with such an Air of Austerity, as made my timorous Lady lose most of the Spirit she had assum'd for this Encounter. I come not now, *Amena*, said he to upbraid or punish your Disobedience; if you are not wholly abandon'd by your Reason, your own Reflexions will be sufficiently your Tormentors. But to put you in a Way (if not to clear your Fame, yet to take away all Occasion of future Calumny) you must write to Count D' Elmont.

I WILL have no Denials, continu'd he, (seeing her about to speak) and leading her to her Escritore, constrain'd her to write what he dictated, and you receiv'd; just as she was going to seal it, a Servant brought word that a Gentleman desir'd to speak with Monsieur *Sanseverin*; he was oblig'd to step into another Room, and that Absence gave her an Opportunity of writing a Note, which she dextrously slip'd into the Letter, unperceiv'd by her Father at his Return, who little suspecting what she had done, sent it away immediately. Now, said he, we shall be able to judge of the Sincerity of the Count's Affections, but till then I shall take care to prove myself a Person not disinterested in the Honour of my Family. As he spoke these Words, he took her by the Hand, and conducting her thro' his own, into a little Chamber (which he had order'd to be made ready for that Purpose) shut her into it: I follow'd to the Door, and seconded my Lady in her Desires, that I might be permitted to attend her there; but all in vain; he told me he doubted not but that I had been her Confident in this Affair, and order'd me to quit his House in a few Days. As soon as he was gone out, I went into the Garden, and saunter'd up and down a good while, hoping to get an Opportunity of speaking to my Lady thro' the Window, for I knew there was one that look'd into it; but

but not seeing her, I bethought me of getting a little Stick, with which I knocked gently against the Glass, and engaged her to open it. As soon as she perceived me, a Beam of Joy brightned in her Eyes, and glisten'd through her Tears. Dear *Anaret*, said she, how kindly do I take this Proof of thy Affection; 'tis only in thy Power to alleviate my Misfortunes, and thou, I know, art come to offer thy Assistance. Then, after I had assured her of my Willingness to serve her in any Command, she desired me to wait on you with an Account of all that had happened, and to give you her Vows of an eternal Love. My Eyes, said she, weeping, perhaps may ne'er behold him more; but Imagination shall supply that Want, and from my Heart he never shall be absent. Oh! do not talk thus, cry'd the Count, extremely touch'd at this Discourse; I must, I will see her, nothing shall hold her from me. You may, answered *Anaret*; but then it must be with the Approbation of Monsieur *Sanseverin*: He will be proud to receive you in Quality of a Suitor to his Daughter, and 'tis only to oblige you to a publick Declaration that he takes these Measures. *D'Elmont* was not perfectly pleas'd with these Words; he was too quick-sighted not to perceive immediately what Monsieur *Sanseverin* drove at, but as well as he lik'd *Amena*, found no Inclination in himself to marry her; and therefore was not desirous of an Explanation of what he resolv'd not to seem to understand. He walk'd two or three Turns about the Room, endeavouring to conceal his Disgust; and when he had so well overcome the Shock, as to banish all visible Tokens of it, I would willingly, said he, coldly, come into any proper Method for the obtaining the Person of *Amena*, as well as her Heart; but there are certain Reasons for which I cannot make a Discovery of my Designs to her Father, 'till I have first spoken with her. My Lord, reply'd the subtle

Anaret

Anaret (easily guessing at his Meaning) I wish to Heaven there were a Possibility of your meeting; there is nothing I would not risque to forward it; and if your Lordship can think of any Way in which I may be serviceable to you, in this short Time I am allow'd to stay in the Family, I beg you would command me. She spoke this with an Air, which made the Count believe she really had it in her Power to serve him on this Occasion, and presently hit on the surest Means to bind her to his Interest. You are very obliging, said he, and I doubt not but your Ingenuity is equal to your Good-Nature; therefore will leave the Contrivance of my Happiness entirely to you; and that you may not think your Care bestow'd on an ungrateful Person, be pleas'd (continu'd he, giving her a Purse of *Louis-d'ors*) to accept this small Earnest of my future Friendship. *Anaret*, like most of her Function, was too mercenary to resist such a Temptation, though it had been given her to betray the Honour of her whole Sex; and, after a little Pause, reply'd, your Lordship is too generous to be refus'd, though in a Matter of the greatest Difficulty, as indeed this is; for in the strict Confinement my Lady is, I know no Way but one, and that extremely hazardous to her; however, I do not fear but my Persuasions, join'd with her own Desires, will influence her to attempt it. Your Lordship knows we have a little Door at the farther End of the Garden, that opens into the *Tuilleries*. I do, cry'd *D'Elmont*, interrupting her, I have several times parted from my Charmer there, when my Entreaties have prevail'd with her to stay longer with me than she would have the Family to take Notice of. I hope to order the Matter so, resum'd *Anaret*, that it shall be the Scene this Night of a most happy meeting. My Lady, unknown to her Father, has the Key of it; she can throw it to me from her Window, and I can open it to you, who must be walking

walking near it, about twelve or one o' Clock, for by that time every body will be in Bed. But what will that avail, cry'd *D'Elmont* hastily, since she lies in her Father's Chamber, where 'tis impossible to pass without alarming him? You Lovers are so impatient, rejoined *Anaret*, smiling; I never design'd you should have Entrance there, though the Window is so low that a Person of your Lordship's Stature and Agility might mount it with a Galliard Step; but I suppose it will turn to as good an Account, if your Mistress by my Assistance gets out of it. But can she, interrupted he? will she, dost thou think? Fear not, my Lord, reply'd she, be but punctual to the Hour, *Amena* shall be yours, if Love, Wit, and Opportunity have Power to make her so. *D'Elmont* was transported with this Promise, and the Thoughts of what he expected to possess by her means rais'd his Imagination to so high a Pitch, as he cou'd not forbear kissing and embracing her with such Raptures, as might not have been very pleasing to *Amena*, had she been Witness of 'em. But *Anaret*, who had other things in her Head than Gallantry, disengaged herself from him as soon as she could, taking more Satisfaction in forwarding an Affair in which she propos'd so much Advantage, than in the Caresses of the most accomplish'd Gentleman in the World.

WHEN she came Home, she found every thing as she could wish, Monsieur abroad, and his Daughter at the Window, impatiently watching her Return; she told her as much of the Discourse she had with the Count as she thought proper, extolling his Love and Constancy, and carefully concealing all she thought might give an Umbrage to her Virtue. But in spite of all the Artifice she made use of, she found it no easy Matter to persuade her to get out of the Window; the Fears she had of being discover'd, and more expos'd to her Father's

Father's Indignation, and the Censure of the World, damp'd her Inclinations, and made her deaf to the eager Sollicitations of this unfaithful Woman. As they were disputing, some of the Servants happening to come into the Garden, oblig'd 'em to break off; and *Anaret* retir'd, not totally despairing of compassing her Designs when the appointed Hour should arrive, and *Amena* should know the darling Object of her Wishes was so near. Nor did her Hopes deceive her, the Resolutions of a Lover, when made against the Interest of the Person beloved, are but of a short Duration; and this unhappy Fair was no sooner left alone, and had Leisure to contemplate on the Graces of the charming *D'Elmont*, but Love play'd his part with such Success, as made her repent she had chid *Anaret* for her Proposal, and wish'd for nothing more than an Opportunity to tell her so. She pass'd several Hours in Disquietudes she had never known before, till at last she heard her Father come into the next Room to go to Bed, and soon after some Body knock'd softly at the Window; she immediately open'd it, and perceiv'd by the Light of the Moon which then shone very bright, that it was *Anaret*; she had not Patience to listen to the long Speech the other had prepared to persuade her, but putting out her Head as far as she could, to prevent being heard by her Father; Well, *Anaret*, said she, where is this Adventurous Lover? what is it he requires of me? Oh! Madam, reply'd she, overjoy'd at the compliable Humour she found her in, he is now at the Garden Door, there's nothing wanting but your Key to give him Entrance; what farther he requests, himself shall tell you. Oh Heavens! cry'd *Amena*, searching her Pockets, and finding she had it not, I am undone, I have left it in my Cabinet in the Chamber where I us'd to lie. These Words made *Anaret* at her Wit's End, she knew there was no Possibility of
fetching

fetching it, there being so many Rooms to go through; she ran to the Door, and endeavour'd to push back the Lock, but had not Strength; she then knew not what to do, she was sure *D'Elmont* was on the other Side, and fear'd he would resent this Usage to the Disappointment of all her mercenary Hopes, and durst not call to acquaint him with his Misfortune, for fear of being heard. As for *Amena*, she was now more sensible than ever of the Violence of her Inclinations, by the extreme Vexation this Disappointment gave her: Never did People pass a Night in greater Uneasiness than these three; the Count, who was naturally impatient, could not bear a Baulk of this Nature, without the utmost Chagrin. *Amena* languish'd, and *Anaret* fretted to Death, though she resolv'd to leave no Stone unturn'd to set all right again. Early in the Morning she went to his Lodgings, and found him in a very ill Humour; but she easily pacify'd him, by representing with a great deal of real Grief, the Accident that retarded his Happiness, and assuring him there was nothing could hinder the fulfilling it the next Night. When she had gained this Point, she came home and got the Key into her Possession, but could not find an Opportunity all Day of speaking to her Lady; Monsieur *Sanseverin* did not stir out of Doors, and spent most of it with his Daughter: In his Discourse to her, he set the Passion the Count had for her in so true a Light, that it made a very great Alteration in her Sentiments; and she began to reflect on the Condescensions she had given a Man, who had never so much as mention'd Marriage to her, with so much Shame, as almost overwhelm'd her Love, and she was now determin'd never to see him, 'till he should declare himself to her Father in such a manner as would be for her Honour.

IN the mean time *Anaret* waited with a great deal of Impatience for the Family going to Bed; and as soon as all was hush, ran to give the Count Admittance; and leaving him in an Alley on the farther Side of the Garden, made the accustom'd Sign at the Window. *Amena* presently open'd it, but instead of staying to hear what she would say, threw a Letter out; Carry that, said she, to Count *D'Elmont*, let him know the Contents of it are wholly the Result of my own Reason: And as for your Part, I charge you trouble me no farther on this Subject. Then shutting the Casement hastily, left *Anaret* in a strange Consternation at this sudden Change of her Humour; however she made no Delay, but running to the Place where the Count waited her Return, delivered him the Letter, but advised him (who was ready enough of himself) not to obey any Commands might be given him to the Hindrance of his Designs. The Moon was then at the Full, and gave so clear a Light, that he easily found it contain'd these Words.



TO COUNT D'ELMONT.

TOO many Proofs have I given you of my Weakness, not to make you think me incapable of forming or keeping any Resolution to the Prejudice of that Passion you have inspir'd me with: But know, thou Undoer of my Quiet, though I have loved and still do love you with a Tendernefs, which I fear will be unvanquishable; yet I will rather suffer my Life, than my Virtue to become its Prey.

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The FATAL ENQUIRY. 23

Press me then no more, I conjure you, to such dangerous Interviews, in which I dare neither trust Myself, nor You; if you believe me worthy your real Regard, the Way through Honour is open to receive you; Religion, Reason, Modesty and Obedience forbid the rest.

Farewell.

D'Elmont knew the Power he had over her too well, to be much discourag'd at what he read; and after a little Consultation with *Anaret*, they concluded he should go to speak to her, as being the best Solicitor in his own Cause. As he came down the Walk, *Amena* saw him through the Glass, and the Sight of that beloved Object, bringing a thousand past Endearments to her Memory, made her incapable of retiring from the Window, and she remained in a languishing and immoveable Posture, leaning her Head against the Shutter, 'till he drew near enough to discern she saw him. He took this for no ill Omen, and instead of falling on his Knees at an humble Distance, as some romantick Lovers would have done, he redoubled his Pace, and Love and Fortune, which on this Occasion were resolv'd to befriend him, presented to his View a large Rolling-stone which the Gardener had accidentally left there; the Iron-work that held it was very high, and strong enough to bear a much greater Weight than his; so he made no more to do, but getting on the Top of it, was almost to the Waist, above the Bottom of the Casement. This was a strange Trial, for had she been less in Love, good Manners would have oblig'd her to open it; however she retained so much of her former Resolution, as to conjure him to be gone, and not expose her to such Hazards; that if her Father should come to know she held any clandestine Correspondence with him, after the Commands he had given her, she were utterly undone, and that he never must expect

expect any Condescensions from her, without being first allow'd by him. *D'Elmont*, though he was a little startled to find her so much more Mistress of her Temper than he believ'd she could be, yet resoly'd to make all possible Use of this Opportunity, which probably might be the last he should ever have, look'd on her as she spoke, with Eyes so piercing, so sparkling with Desire, accompanied with so bewitching Softness, as might have thaw'd the most frozen Reservedness, and on the melting Soul stamp'd Love's Impression. 'Tis certain they were too irresistible to be long withstood, and putting an End to *Amena's* grave Remonstrances, gave him Leave to reply to 'em in this manner. Why my Life, my Angel, said he, my everlasting Treasure of my Soul, shou'd these Objections now be rais'd? How can you say you have given me your Heart? Nay, own you think me worthy that inestimable Jewel, yet dare not trust your Person with me a few Hours: What have you to fear from your adoring Slave? I want but to convince you how much I am so, by a thousand yet uninvented Vows. They may be spar'd, cry'd *Amena*, hastily interrupting him, one Declaration to my Father, is all the Proof that he or I demands of your Sincerity. Oh! Thou inhuman and tyrannick Charmer, answer'd he, seizing her Hand, and eagerly kissing it, I doubt not but your faithful *Anaret* has told you that I could not without the highest Imprudence, presently discover the Passion I have for you to the World. I have, my Lord, said that cunning Wench who stood near him, and that 'twas only to acquaint her with the Reasons why, for some Time, you would have it a Secret, that you much desired to speak with her. Besides (rejoin'd the Count) consider, my Angel, how much more hazardous it is for you to hold Discourse with me here, than at a farther Distance from your Father; your deny-
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ing to go with me, is the only way to make your Fears prove true; his Jealousy of you may possibly make him more watchful than ordinary, and we are not sure but that this Minute he may tear you from my Arms; whereas, if you suffer me to bear you hence, if he should happen to come even to your Door, and hear no Noise, he will believe you sleeping, and return to his Bed well satisfy'd. With these and the like Arguments she was at last overcome; and with the Assistance of *Anaret*, he easily lifted her down. But this rash Action, so contrary to the Resolution she thought herself a few Moments before so fix'd in, made such a Confusion in her Mind, as render'd her insensible for some Time of all he said to her. They made what Haste they could into the *Tuilleries*; and *D'Elmont* having plac'd her on one of the most pleasant Seats, was resolv'd to lose no Time; and having given her some Reasons for his not addressing to her Father, which, tho' weak in themselves, were easily believ'd by a Heart so willing to be deceiv'd as her's, he began to press for a greater Confirmation of her Affection than Words; and 'twas now this inconsiderate Lady found herself in the greatest Strait she had ever yet been in; all Nature seem'd to favour his Design, the Pleasantness of the Place, the Silence of the Night, the Sweetness of the Air, perfum'd with a thousand various Odours, wafted by gentle Breezes from adjacent Gardens, compleated the most delightful Scene that ever was, to offer up a Sacrifice to Love; not a Breath but flew wing'd with Desire, and sent soft thrilling Wishes to the Soul; *Cynthia* herself, cold as she is reported, assisted in the Inspiration, and sometimes shone with all her Brightness, as it were to feast their ravish'd Eyes with gazing on each other's Beauty; then veil'd her Beams in Clouds to give the Lover Boldness, and hide the Virgin's Blushes. What now could poor *Amena* do, surrounded

with so many Powers, attack'd by such a charming Force without, betray'd by Tendernefs within: Virtue and Pride, the Guardians of her Honour, fled from her Breast, and left her to her Foe, only a modest Bashfulness remain'd, which for a Time made some Defence, but with such Weakness, as a Lover, less impatient than *D'Elmont*, would have little regarded. The Heat of the Weather, and her Confinement, having hindered her from dressing that Day, she had only a thin Silk Nightgown on, which flying open as he caught her in his Arms, he found her panting Heart beat Measures of Consent, her heaving Breast swell to be press'd by his, and every Pulse confesses a Wish to yield; her Spirits all dissolv'd, sunk in a Lethargy of Love; her snowy Arms, unknowing, grasp'd his Neck, her Lips met his half-way, and trembled at the Touch; in fine, there was but a Moment betwixt her and Ruin, when the Tread of somebody coming hastily down the Walk, oblig'd the half-blest Pair to put a Stop to farther Endearments. It was *Anaret*, who having been left Centinel in the Garden, in order to open the Door when her Lady should return, had seen Lights in every Room in the House, and heard great Confusion, so ran immediately to give 'em Notice of this Misfortune. These dreadful Tidings soon rous'd *Amena* from her Dream of Happiness; she accus'd the Influence of her amorous Stars, upbraided *Anaret*, and blamed the Count in Terms little different from Distraction, and 'twas as much as both of them could do, to persuade her to be calm. However, 'twas concluded that *Anaret* should go back to the House, and return to 'em again, as soon as she had learn'd what Accident had occasion'd this Disturbance. The Lovers had now a second Opportunity, if either of 'em had been inclin'd to make use of it; but their Sentiments were entirely chang'd with this Alarm;

Amena's

Amena's Thoughts were wholly taken up with her approaching Shame, and vow'd she would rather die than ever come into her Father's Presence, if it were true that she was mis'd. The Count, who wanted not Good-Nature, seriously reflecting on the Misfortunes he was likely to bring on a young Lady, who tenderly lov'd him, gave him a great deal of real Remorse, and the Consideration that he should be necessitated, either to own an injurious Design, or come into Measures for the clearing of it, which would in no way agree with his Ambition, made him extremely pensive, and with *Amena* again in her Chamber more earnestly than ever he had done to get her out of it; they both remain'd in a profound Silence, impatiently waiting the Approach of *Anaret*; but she not coming as they expected, and the Night wearing away apace, very much increas'd the Trouble they were in; at length the Count, after revolving a thousand Inventions in his Mind, advis'd to walk toward the Garden, and see whether the Door was yet open. 'Tis better for you, Madam, said he, whatsoever has happened, to be found in your own Garden, than in any Place with me. *Amena* comply'd, and suffer'd herself to be led thither, trembling, and ready to sink with Fear and Grief at every Step; but when they found all fast, and that there was no Hopes of getting Entrance, she fell quite senseless, and without any Signs of Life, at her Lover's Feet; he was strangely at a Loss what to do with her, and made a thousand Vows, if he got clear of this Adventure, never to embark on another of this Nature: He was little skill'd in proper Means to recover her, and 'twas more to her Youth and the Goodness of her Constitution that she owed the Return of her Senses, than his aukward Endeavours. When she reviv'd, the piteous Lamentations she made, and the Perplexity he was in how to dispose of her,

was very near reducing him to as bad a Condition as she had been in; he never till now having had occasion for a Confident, render'd him so unhappy, as not to know any one Person at whose House he could, with any Convenience, trust her; and to carry her to that where he had Lodgings, was the way to be made the Talk of all *Paris*. He ask'd her several times if she would not command him to wait on her to some Place where she might remain free from Censure, till she heard from her Father, but could get no Answer but Upbraidings from her. So making a Virtue of a Necessity, he was oblig'd to take her in his Arms, with a Design to bring her (tho' much against his Inclinations) to his own Apartment. As he was going thro' a very fair Street which led to that in which he liv'd, *Amena* cry'd out with a sort of Joy, Loose me, my Lord, I see a Light in yonder House, the Lady of it is my dearest Friend, she has Power with my Father, and if I beg her Protection, I doubt not but she will afford it me, and perhaps find some way to mitigate my Misfortunes. The Count was over-joy'd to be eas'd of his fair Burthen; and setting her down at the Gate, was preparing to take his Leave with an Indifference, which was but too visible to the afflicted Lady. I see, my Lord, said she, the Pleasure you take in getting rid of me, exceeds the Trouble for the Ruin you have brought upon me; but go, I hope I shall resent this Usage as I ought; and that I may be the better enabled so to do, I desire you to return the Letter I writ this fatal Night; the Resolution it contain'd will serve to remind me of my shameful Breach of it.

MADAM (answer'd he coldly, but with great Complaisance) you have said enough to make a Lover, less obedient, refuse, but because I am sensible of the Accidents that happen to Letters, and to shew that I can never be repugnant even to the
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The FATAL ENQUIRY. 29

most rigorous of your Commands, I shall make no Scruple in fulfilling this, and trust to your Goodness for the re-settling me in your Esteem, when next you make me so happy as to see you. The Formality of this Compliment touch'd her to the Quick, and the Thought of what she was like to suffer on his Account, fill'd her with so just an Anger, that as soon as she got the Letter, she knock'd hastily at the Gate, which being immediately open'd, broke off any further Discourse; she went in and he departed to his Lodging, ruminating on every Circumstance of this Affair, and consulting with himself how he should proceed. *Aloviza* (for it was her House which *Amena* by a whimsical Effect of Chance had made choice of for her Sanctuary) was no sooner told her Rival was come to speak with her, but she fell into all the Raptures that successful Malice could inspire; she was already inform'd of Part of this Night's Adventure; for the cunning *Charlo* who, by her Orders had been a diligent Spy on Count *D'Elmont's* Actions, and as constant an Attendant on him as his Shadow, had watch'd him to Monsieur *Sanseverin's* Garden, seen him enter, and afterwards come with *Amena* into the *Tuilleries*; where perceiving 'em seated, ran home, and brought his Lady an Account; Rage, Jealousy, and Envy working their usual Effects in her, at this News, made her promise the Fellow infinite Rewards if he would invent some Stratagem to separate 'em, which he undertaking to do, occasion'd her being up so late, impatiently waiting his Return; she went down to receive her with great Civility, mix'd with a feign'd Surprise to see her at such an Hour, and in such a Dishabille; which the other answering ingenuously, and freely letting her into the whole Secret, not only of her Amour, but the Coldness she observ'd in *D'Elmont's* Behaviour at parting, fill'd this cruel Woman with so exquisite

site a Joy, as she was hardly capable of dissembling; therefore to get Liberty to indulge it, and to learn the rest of the Particulars of *Charlo*, who she heard was come in, she told *Amena* she would have her go to Bed, and endeavour to compose herself, and that she would send for Monsieur *Sanseverin* in the Morning, and endeavour to reconcile him to her. I will also, added she, with a deceitful Smile, see the Count *D'Elmont*, and talk to him in a manner as shall make him truly sensible of his Happiness; nay, so far my Friendship shall extend, that if there be any real Cause for making your Amour a Secret, he shall see you at my House, and pass for a Visitor of mine; I have nobody to whom I need be accountable for my Actions, and am above the Censures of the World. *Amena* thank'd her in Terms full of Gratitude, and went with the Maid whom *Alovisa* had order'd to conduct her to a Chamber prepared for her. As soon as she had got rid of her, she call'd for *Charlo*, impatient to hear by what Contrivance this lucky Chance had befallen her. Madam, said he, tho' I form'd a thousand Inventions, I found not any so plausible, as to alarm Monsieur *Sanseverin*'s Family with an Outcry of Fire: Therefore I rang the Bell at the Fore-Gate of the House, and bellow'd in the most terrible Accent I could possibly turn my Voice to, Fire! Fire! Rise, or you will all be burnt in your Beds. I had not repeated this many times, before I found the Effect I wish'd; the Noises I heard, and the Lights I saw in the Rooms, assur'd me that there were no Sleepers left; then I ran to the *Tuilleries*, designing to observe the Lovers Proceedings, but I found they were appriz'd of the Danger they were in of being discover'd, and were coming to endeavour an Entrance into the Garden. I know the rest, interrupted *Alovisa*; the Event has answered even beyond my Wishes, and thy

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Reward for this good Service, shall be greater than thy Expectations. As she said these Words, she retir'd to her Chamber, more satisfied than she had been for many Months. Quite different did poor *Amena* pass the Night; for besides the Grief of having disobliged her Father, banish'd herself his House, and expos'd her Reputation to the unavoidable Censures of the un pitying World, for an ungrateful, or at best, an indifferent Lover, she receiv'd a vast Addition of Afflictions, when taking out the Letter which *D'Elmont* had given her at parting, possibly to weep over it, and accuse herself for so inconsiderately breaking the noble Resolution she had form'd, when it was writ, she found it was *Alovisa's* Hand; for the Count by Mistake had given her the second he received from that Lady, instead of that she desir'd him to return. Never was Surprise, Confusion, and Despair at such a height, as in *Amena's* Soul at this Discovery; she was now assur'd by what she read, that she had fled for Protection to the very Person she ought most to have avoided; that she had made a Confident of her greatest Enemy, a Rival dangerous to her Hopes in every Circumstance. She consider'd the high Birth and vast Possessions that *Alovisa* was Mistress of, in Opposition to her Father's scanty Power of making her a Fortune; her Wit and Subtilty, against her Innocence and Simplicity; her Pride and the Respect her Grandeur commanded from the World, against her own deplor'd and wretched State; and look'd upon herself as wholly lost. The Violence of her Sorrow is more easily imagin'd than express'd; but of all her melancholy Reflections, none rack'd her equal to the Belief she had that *D'Elmont* was not unsensible by this time whom the Letter came from, and had only made a Court to her to amuse himself a while, and then suffer her to fall a Sacrifice to his Ambition, and feed the Vanity of her

Rival; a just Indignation now open'd the Eyes of her Understanding; and considering all the Passages of the Count's Behaviour, she saw a thousand things which told her, his Designs on her were far unworthy of the Name of Love. None that were ever touch'd with the least of those Passions which agitated the Soul of *Amena*, can believe they would permit Sleep to enter her Eyes: But if Grief and Distraction kept her from Repose, *Alovisa* had too much Business on her Hands to enjoy much more; she had promis'd *Amena* to send for her Father and the Count, and found there were not too many Moments before Morning, to contrive so many different Forms of Behaviour, as should deceive 'em all three, compleat the Ruin of her Rival, and engage the Addresses of her Lover. As soon as she thought it a proper Hour, she dispatch'd a Messenger to Count *D'Elmont*, and another to Monsieur *Sanseverin*, who, full of Sorrow as he was, immediately obey'd her Summons. She receiv'd him in her Dressing-Room, and with a great deal of feign'd Trouble in her Countenance accosted him in this manner, How hard is it, said she, to dissemble Grief, and in spite of all the Care, which I doubt not you have taken to conceal it, in Consideration of your own and Daughter's Honour, I too plainly perceive it in your Face to imagine that my own is hid. How! Madam, cry'd the impatient Father (giving a loose to his Tears) are you acquainted then with my Misfortune? Alas, answer'd she, I fear by the Consequences, you have been the last to whom it has been reveal'd. I hop'd that my Advice, and the daily Proofs the Count gave your Daughter of the little Regard he had for her, might have fir'd her to a generous Disdain, and have a thousand Pardons to ask of you for Breach of Friendship, in concealing an Affair so requisite you should have known. Oh! Madam, resum'd he, interrupt-

ing

ing her, I conjure you make no Apologies for what is past ; I know too well the Greatness of your Goodness, and the Favour you have always been pleas'd to honour her with, not to be assur'd she was happy in your Esteem ; and only beg I may no longer be kept in Ignorance of the fatal Secret. You shall be inform'd of all, said she ; but then you must promise me to act by my Advice ; which he having promis'd, she told him after what manner *Amena* came to her House, the Coldness the Count express'd to her, and the Violence of her Passion for him. Now, said she, if you should suffer your Rage to break out in any publick Manner against the Count, it will only serve to make your Daughter's Dishonour the Table-Talk of all *Paris*. He is too great at Court, and has too many Friends to be compell'd to any Terms for your Satisfaction ; besides, the least Noise might make him discover by what Means he first became acquainted with her, and her excessive, I will not say troublesome Fondness of him since ; which should he do, the Shame would be wholly hers, for few would condemn him for accepting the offer'd Caresses of a Lady so young and beautiful as *Amena*. But is it possible, cry'd he (quite confounded at these Words) that she should stoop so low as to offer Love ! O Heavens ! is this the Effect of all my Prayers, my Care, and my Indulgence ! Doubt not, resum'd *Alovisa*, of the Truth of what I say ; I have it from herself ; and to convince you it is so, I shall inform you of something I had forgot before. Then she told him of the Note she had slip'd into the Letter he had forc'd her to write, and of sending *Anaret* to his Lodgings, which she heightened with all the aggravating Circumstances her Wit and Malice could suggest ; till the old Man believing all she said as an Oracle, was almost senseless between Grief and Anger ; but the latter growing rather the most predominant, he vow'd to punish

her in such a Manner as should deter all Children from Disobedience. Now, said *Alovisa*, it is that I expect the Performance of your Promise ; these Threats avail but little to the retrieving your Daughter's Reputation, or your Quiet ; be therefore persuaded to make no Words of it, compose your Countenance as much as possible to Serenity, and think if you have no Friend in a Monastery where you could send her till this Discourse and her own foolish Folly be blown over. If you have not, I can recommend you to one at St. *Dennis*, where the Abbess is my near Relation, and on my Letter will use her with all imaginable Tenderneſs. Monsieur was extremely pleas'd at this Propoſal, and gave her thoſe Thanks the ſeeming Kindneſs of her Offer deſerved. I would not, reſum'd ſhe, have you take her Home, or ſee her before ſhe goes ; or if you do, not till all Things are ready for her Departure ; for I know ſhe will be prodigal of her Promiſes of Amendment, till ſhe has prevail'd with your fatherly Indulgence to permit her Stay at *Paris*, and know as well ſhe will not have the Power to keep 'em in the ſame Town with the Count. She ſhall, if you pleaſe, remain conceal'd in my Houſe till you have provided for her Journey ; and it will be a great Means to put a Stop to any farther Reflections the Malicious may make on her, if you give out ſhe is already gone to ſome Relations in the Country. As ſhe was ſpeaking, *Charlo* came to acquaint her, one was come to viſit her. She made no doubt but 'twas *D'Elmont*, therefore haſtened away Monsieur *Sanſeverin*, after having fix'd him in a Reſolution to do every thing as ſhe advis'd. It was indeed Count *D'Elmont* that was come, which as ſoon as ſhe was aſſur'd of, ſhe ſoon threw off her dejected and mournful Air, and aſſum'd one all gaiety and good Humour, dimpled her Mouth

with

with Smiles, and call'd the laughing Cupids to her Eyes.

MY Lord, said she, you do well by this early Visit to retrieve your Sex's drooping Fame of Constancy, and prove the Nicety of *Amena's* Discernment, in conferring Favours on a Person, who to his excellent Qualifications, has that of Assiduity to deserve them. As he was about to reply, the Rush of somebody coming hastily down the Stairs, which faced the Room they were in, oblig'd 'em to turn that Way. It was the unfortunate *Amena*, who not being able to endure the Thoughts of staying in her Rival's House, distracted with her Griefs, and not regarding what should become of her, as soon as she heard the Doors were open, was preparing to fly from that detested Place. *Alovisa* was vex'd to the Heart at the Sight of her, hoping to have had some Discourse with the Count, before they met; but she dissembled it, and catching hold of her as she was endeavouring to pass, ask'd where she was going, and what occasion'd the Disorder she observ'd in her? I go (answered *Amena*) from a false Lover and a falser Friend: But why should I upbraid you (continu'd she, looking wildly sometimes on the Count, and sometimes on *Alovisa*) treacherous Pair? you know too well each other's Baseness, and my Wrongs; no longer then detain a Wretch, whose Presence, had you the least Sense of Honour, Gratitude, or even common Humanity, would fill your Consciences with Remorse and Shame; and who has now no other Wish than that of shunning you for ever. As she spoke this, she struggled to get loose from *Alovisa's* Arms, who in Spite of the Amazement she was in, still held her. *D'Elmont* was no less confounded, and, intirely ignorant of the Meaning of what he heard, was at a loss how to reply, till she resumed her Reproaches in this Manner: Why, ye Monsters of Barbarity, said she,

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do you delight in beholding the Ruins you have made? Is not the Knowledge of my Miseries, my everlasting Miseries, sufficient to content you? And must I be debarr'd that only Remedy for Woes like mine, Death; Oh! cruel Return for all my Love, my Friendship, and the Confidence I repos'd in you! Oh! to what am I reduced by my too soft and easy Nature! hard Fate of Tenderness, which healing others, only wounds itself. Just Heavens! ——— here she stopp'd; the Violence of her Resentment, endeavouring to vent itself in Sighs, rose in her Breast with such an Impetuosity as choak'd the Passage of her Words, and she fell into a Swoon. Tho' the Count and *Alovisa* were both in the greatest Consternation imaginable, yet neither of 'em were negligent in trying to recover her; as they were busy'd about her, that fatal Letter which had been the Cause of this Disturbance, fell out of her Bosom, and both being eager to take it up (believing it might make some Discovery) had their Hands on it at the same time; it was but slightly folded, and immediately shew'd them from what Source *Amena's* Despair proceeded. Her Upbraidings of *Alovisa*, and the Blushes and Confusion which he observ'd in that Lady's Face, as soon as ever she saw it open'd, put an end to the Mystery, and one less quick of Apprehension than *D'Elmont*, would have made no Difficulty in finding his unknown Admirer in the Person of *Alovisa*: She, to conceal the Disorder she was in at this Adventure as much as possible, call'd her Women, and order'd them to convey *Amena* into another Chamber where there was more Air; as she was preparing to follow, turning a little towards the Count, but still extremely confus'd, You'll pardon me, my Lord, said she, if my Concern for my Friend obliges me to leave you. Ah, Madam, reply'd he, forbear to make any Apologies to me; rather summon all your Goodness

ness to forgive a Wretch so blind to Happiness as I have been : She either could not, or would not make any Answer to these Words, but seeming as tho' she heard 'em not, went hastily into the Room where *Amena* was, leaving the Count full of various and confus'd Reflexions. The Sweetness of his Disposition made him regret his being the Author of *Amena's* Misfortunes ; but how miserable is that Woman's Condition, who by her Mismanagement is reduc'd to so poor a Comfort as the Pity of her Lover ? That Sex is generally too gay to continue long uneasy, and there was little likelihood he could be capable of lamenting Ills, which his small Acquaintance with the Passion from which they sprung, made him not comprehend. The Pleasure the Discovery gave him of a Secret he had so long desir'd to find out, kept him from being too much concern'd at the Adventure that occasion'd it ; but he could not forbear accusing himself of intolerable Stupidity, when he consider'd the Passages of *Alovisa's* Behaviour, her Swooning at the Ball, her constant Glances, her frequent Blushes when he talk'd to her ; and all his Cogitations, whether on *Alovisa* or *Amena*, were mingled with a Wonder that Love should have such Power. The Diversity of his Thoughts would have entertain'd him much longer, if they had not been interrupted by his Page, who came in a great hurry, to acquaint him, that his Brother the young Chevalier *Brilliant* was just come to Town, and waited with Impatience for his coming Home : As much a Stranger as *D'Elmont* was to the Affairs of Love, he was none to those of Friendship ; and making no doubt but that the former ought to yield to the latter in every Respect, contented himself with telling one of *Alovisa's* Servants, as he went out, that he would wait on her in the Evening, and made what haste he could to give his beloved Brother the Welcome he expected after so long

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long an Absence ; and indeed the Manner of their meeting, express'd a most entire and sincere Affection on both Sides. The Chevalier was but a Year younger than the Count ; they had been bred together from their Infancy, and there was such a Sympathy in their Souls, and so great a Resemblance in their Persons, as very much contributed to endear 'em to each other with a Tendernefs, far beyond that which is ordinarily found among Relations. After the first Testimonies of it were over, *D'Elmont* began to question him how he had pass'd his Time since their Separation, and to give him some little Reproaches for not writing so often as he might have expected. Alas ! my dearest Brother, reply'd the Chevalier, such various Adventures have happen'd to me since we parted, as when I relate 'em will, I hope, excuse my seeming Negligence. These Words were accompany'd with Sighs, and a melancholy Air immediately overspreading his Face, and taking away great Part of the Vivacity which lately sparkled in his Eyes, rais'd an impatient Desire in the Count to know the Reason of it, which when he had express'd, the other (after having engag'd him, that whatever Causes he might find to ridicule his Folly, he would suspend all Appearance of it till the End of his Narration) began to satisfy in this Manner.





THE
S T O R Y
OF THE
Chevalier BRILLIAN.

AT *St. Omers*, where you left me, I happen'd to make an Acquaintance with one Monsieur *Belpine*, a Gentleman who was there on some Business; we being both pretty much Strangers in the Place, occasion'd an Intimacy between us, which the Disparity of our Tempers would have prevented our commencing at *Paris*; but you know I was never a Lover of Solitude, and for want of Company more agreeable, was willing to encourage his. He was indeed so obliging as to stay longer at *St. Omers* than his Affairs required, purposely to engage me to make *Amiens* in my Way to *Paris*. He was very vain; and fancying himself happy in the Esteem of the Fair Sex, was desirous I should be Witness of the Favours they bestow'd on him. Among the Number of those he used to talk of, was *Madamoiselle Ansellina de la Tour*, a *Persian* Lady, and Heiress of a great Estate, but had been some time at *Amiens* with Madam the Baroness *De Beronville*, her Godmother. The Wonders he told me of this young Lady's Wit and Beauty, inclin'd me

me to a Desire of seeing her ; and as soon as I was in a Condition to travel, we took our Way towards *Amiens* ; he us'd me with all the Friendship he was capable of expressing, and soon after we arriv'd, carry'd me to the Barones's : But, oh Heavens ! how great was my Astonishment, when I found *Anellina* as far beyond his faint Description, as the Sun-Beams the Imitation of Art ; besides the Regularity of her Features, the Delicacy of her Complexion, and the just Symmetry of her whole Composition, she has an undefcribable Sweetness that plays about her Eyes and Mouth, and softens all her Air : But all her Charms, dazzling as they are, would have lost their captivating Force on me, if I had believ'd her capable of that Weakness for *Belpine*, that his Vanity would have me think. She is very young and gay, and I easily perceiv'd she suffer'd his Addresses more out of Diversion, than any real Regard she had for him ; he held a constant Correspondence at *Paris*, and was continually furnish'd with every thing that was *novel*, and by that means introduc'd himself into many Companies, who else would not have endur'd him ; but when at any time I was so happy as to entertain the lovely *Ansellina* alone, and we had Opportunity for serious Discourse (which was impossible in his Company) I found that she was Mistress of a Wit poignant enough to be satirical, yet it was accompany'd with a Discretion, as very much heighten'd her Charms, and compleated the Conquest that her Eyes begun. I will confess to you, Brother, that I became so devoted to my Passion, that I had no Leisure for any other Sentiments. Fears, Hopes, Anxieties, jealous Pains, uneasy Pleasures, all the Artillery of Love, were garrison'd in my Heart, and a thousand various half-form'd Resolutions fill'd my Head. *Ansellina's* Insensibility among a Croud of Admirers, and the Disparity of our Fortunes, would have given me just Causes of Despair,

The FATAL ENQUIRY. 41

Despair, if the Generosity of her Temper had not dissipated the one, and her Youth, and the Hope her Hour was not yet come, the other. I was often about letting her know the Power she had over me; but something of an Awe, which none but those who truly love can guess at, still prevented my being able to utter it; and I believe should have languish'd till this Moment in an unavailing Silence, if an Accident had not happen'd to embolden me: I went one Day to visit my Adorable, and being told she was in the Garden, went thither in hopes to see her, but being deceiv'd in my Expectation, believ'd the Servant who gave me that Information was mistaken, and fancying she might be retir'd to her Closet, as she very often did in an Afternoon, and the Pleasantness of the Place inducing me to stay there till she was willing to admit me, I sat down at the Foot of a *Diana*, curiously carv'd in Marble, and full of melancholy Reflections, without knowing what I did, took a Black-Lead Pen out of my Pocket, and writ on the Pedestal these two Lines:

*Hopeless, and silent, I must still adore:
Her Heart's more hard than Stone, whom I'd implore.*

I HAD scarce finish'd them, when I perceiv'd *Ansellina* at a good Distance from me, coming out of a little Arbor; the Respect I had for her, made me fear she should know I was the Author of 'em, and guess, what I found, I had not gain'd Courage enough to tell her. I went out of the Alley, as I imagin'd unseen, and design'd to come up another, and meet her, before she could get into the House. But tho' I walk'd pretty fast, she had left the Place before I could attain it; and in her stead (casting my Eyes toward the Statue, with an Intention to rub out what I had writ) I found this Addition to it.

You

*You wrong your Love while you conceal your Pain;
Flints will dissolve with constant Drops of Rain.*

BUT, my dear Brother, if you are yet insensible of the wonderful Effects of Love, you will not be able to imagine what I felt at this View; I was satisfied it could be writ by nobody but *Ansellina*, there being no other Person in the Garden; and knew as well she could not design that Encouragement for any other Man, because on many Occasions she had seen my Hand; and the Day before had written a Song for her, which she desir'd to learn, with that very Pen I now had made Use of; and going hastily away at the Sight of her, had forgot to take with me. I gaz'd upon the dear obliging Characters, and kiss'd the Marble, which contain'd them, a thousand times, before I could find in my Heart to efface 'em. As I was in this agreeable Amazement, I heard *Belpine's* Voice calling to me as he came up the Walk, which oblig'd me to put an End to it, and the Object which occasion'd it. He had been told, as well as I, that *Ansellina* was in the Garden; and expressing some Wonder to see me alone, ask'd where she was? I answer'd him, with a great deal of real Truth, that I knew not, and that I had been there some time, but had not been so happy as to entertain her. He seem'd not to give Credit to what I said, and began to use me after a Fashion as would have much more astonish'd me from any other Person. I would not have you, said he, be concern'd at what I am about to say, because you are one of those for whom I am willing to preserve a Friendship; and to convince you of my Sincerity, give you leave to address after what Manner you please, to any of the Ladies with whom I have brought you acquainted, excepting *Ansellina*. But I take this Opportunity to let you know, I have already

made

made choice of her, with a Design of Marriage ; and from this timeforward, shall look on any Visits you shall make to her, as injurious to my Pretensions. Tho' I was no Stranger to the Vanity and Insolence of *Belpine's* Humour, yet not being accustomed to such arbitrary kind of Treatment, had certainly resented it (if we had been in any other Place) in a very different Manner than I did ; but the Consideration, that to make a Noise there, would be a Reflection, rather than a Vindication on *Ansellina's* Fame ; I contented myself with telling him he might be perfectly easy, that whatever Qualifications the Lady might have that should encourage his Addresses, I should never give her any Reason to boast a Conquest over me. These Words might have born two Interpretations, if the disdainful Air, with which I spoke 'em, and which I could not dissemble, and going immediately away, had not made him take 'em, as they were really design'd, to affront him ; he was full of Indignation and Jealousy, (if it is possible for a Person to be touch'd with that Passion, who is not capable of the other, which generally occasions it ;) but, however, having taken it into his Head to imagine I was better receiv'd by *Ansellina* than he desir'd, Envy, and a Sort of Womanish Spleen transported him so far as to go to *Ansellina's* Apartment, and rail at me most profusely (as I have since been told) and threaten how much he'd be revenged, if he heard I ever should have the Assurance to visit there again. *Ansellina* at first laugh'd at his Folly ; but finding he persisted, and began to assume more Liberty than she ever meant to afford him, instead of listening to his Entreaties to forbid me the Privilege I had enjoy'd of her Conversation, she pass'd that very Sentence on him, and when next I waited on her, receiv'd me with more Respect than ever : and when at last I took the Boldness to acquaint

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quaint her with my Passion; I had the Satisfaction to observe, from the Frankness of her Disposition; that I was not indifferent to her; nor indeed did she, even in publick, affect any Reservedness more than the Decencies of her Sex and Quality requir'd; for after my Pretensions to her were commonly talk'd of, and those who were intimate with her, would rally her about me, she pass'd it off with a Spirit of Gaiety and good Humour peculiar to herself, and bated nothing of her usual Freedom to me; she permitted me to read to her, to walk and dance with her, and I had all the Opportunities of endeavouring an Encrease of her Esteem that I could wish, which so incens'd *Belpine*, that he made no Scruple of reviling both her and me in all Companies where-ever he came; saying I was a little worthless Fellow, who had nothing but my Sword to depend upon; and that *Ansellina* having no Hopes of marrying him, was glad to take up with the first that ask'd her. These scandalous Reports on my first hearing of 'em had assuredly been fatal to one of us, if *Ansellina* had not commanded me, by all the Passion I profess'd, and by the Friendship she freely acknowledged to have for me, not to take any Notice of 'em. I set too high a Value on the Favours she allowed me, to be capable of Disobedience; and she was too nice a Judge of the Punctilio's of our Sex's Honour, not to take this Sacrifice of so just a Resentment, as a very great Proof how much I submitted to her Will, and suffer'd not a Day to pass without giving me some new Mark how nearly she was touch'd with it. I was the most contented and happy Person in the World, still hoping that in a little time (she having no Relations that had Power to contradict her Inclinations) I should be able to obtain every thing from her that an honourable Passion could require; 'till one Evening coming home pretty late from her, my Servant

gave

gave me a Letter, which he told me was left for me by one of *Belpine's* Servants: I presently suspected the Contents, and found I was not mistaken; it was really a Challenge to meet him the next Morning; and must confess, though I long'd for an Opportunity to chastise his Insolence, was a little troubled how to excuse myself to *Ansellina*; but there was no Possibility of evading it, without rendering myself unworthy of her, and I hop'd that Circumstance would be sufficient to clear me to her. I will not trouble you, Brother, with the Particulars of our Duel, since there was nothing material, but that at the third Pass (I know not whether I may call it the Effect of my good or evil Fortune) he receiv'd my Sword a good Depth in his Body, and fell with all the Symptoms of a dying Man. I made all possible Haste to send a Surgeon to him. In my way, I met two Gentlemen, who it seems he had made acquainted with his Design (probably with an Intention to be prevented). They ask'd me what Success, and when I had inform'd them, advis'd me to be gone from *Amiens* before the News should reach the Ears of *Belpine's* Relations, who were not inconsiderable in that place. I made 'em those Retributions their Civilities deserv'd; but how imminent soever the Danger appear'd that threatened me, could not think of leaving *Amiens* without having first seen *Ansellina*. I went to the Baroness's, and found my Charmer at her Toilet, and either it was my Fancy, or else she really did look more amiable in that Undress, than ever I had seen her tho' adorn'd with the utmost Illustrations: She seem'd surpriz'd at seeing me so early, and with her wonted good Humour, asking me the Reason of it, put me into a mortal Agony how to answer her; for I must assure you, Brother, that the Fears of her Displeasure were a thousand times more dreadful to me, than any other Apprehensions; she

she repeated the Question three or four Times before I had Courage to reply, and I believe she was pretty near guessing the Truth by my Silence, and the Disorder in my Countenance before I spoke; and when I did, she receiv'd the Account of the whole Adventure with a vast deal of Trouble, but no Anger; she knew too well what I ow'd to my Reputation, and the Post his Majesty had honour'd me with, to believe I could or ought to dispense with submitting to the Reflections which must have fallen on me, had I acted otherwise than I did. Her Concern and Tears, which she had not Power to contain at the Thoughts of my Departure, join'd with her earnest Conjurings to me to be gone, let me more than ever into the Secrets of her Heart, and gave me a Pleasure as inconceivable as the Necessity of parting did the contrary. Nothing could be more moving than our taking leave; and when she tore herself, half willing and half unwilling, from my Arms, had sent me away inconsolable, if her Promises of coming to *Paris*, as soon as she could without being taken Notice of, and frequently writing to me in the mean time, had not given me a Hope, tho' a distant one, of Happinels. Thus, Brother, have I given you, in as few Words as I could, a Recital of every thing that has happen'd to me of Consequence since our Separation, in which I dare believe you will find more to pity than condemn. The afflicted Chevalier could not conclude without letting fall some Tears; which the Count perceiving, ran to him, and tenderly embracing him, said all that could be expected from a most affectionate Friend to mitigate his Sorrows, nor suffered him to remove from his Arms till he had accomplish'd his Design; and then believing the hearing of the Adventures of another (especially one he was so deeply interested in) would be the surest Means to give a Truce to the more melancholy Reflections on his own, related

lated every thing that had befallen him since his coming to *Paris*. The Letters he received from a Lady *incognito*, his little Gallantries with *Amena*, and the Accident that presented to his View the unknown Lady in the Person of one of the greatest Fortunes in all *France*. Nothing could be a greater Cordial to the Chevalier, than to find his Brother was beloved by the Sister of *Ansellina*; he did not doubt but that by this there might be a Possibility of seeing her sooner than else he could have hop'd, and the two Brothers began to enter into a serious Consultation of this Affair, which ended with a Resolution to fix their Fortunes there. The Count had never yet seen a Beauty formidable enough to give him an Hour's Uneasiness (purely for the sake of Love) and would often say, *Cupid's* Quiver never held an Arrow of Force to reach his Heart; those little Delicacies, those tremblingaking Transports, which every Sight of the beloved Object occasions, and so visibly distinguishes a real Passion from a counterfeit, he look'd on as the Chimera's of an idle Brain, form'd to inspire Notions of an imaginary Bliss, and make Fools lose themselves in seeking; or if they had a Being, it was only in weak Souls, a kind of a Disease with which he assur'd himself he should never be infected. Ambition was certainly the reigning Passion in his Soul, and *Alovisa's* Quality and vast Possessions, promising a full Gratification of that, he ne'er so much as wish'd to know a farther Happiness in Marriage.

BUT while the Count and Chevalier were thus employ'd, the rival Ladies pass their Hours in a very different Entertainment; the Despair and bitter Lamentations that the unfortunate *Amena* made when she came out of her Swooning, were such as mov'd even *Alovisa* to Compassion, and if any thing, but resigning *D'Elmont*, could have given her Consolation, she would willingly have apply'd

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ply'd it. There was now no Need of further Disimulation, and she confess'd to *Amena*, that she had lov'd the charming Count with a Kind of Madness from the first Moment she beheld him : That to favour her Designs on him, she had made use of every Stratagem she could invent ; that by her means, the Amour was first discover'd to Monsieur *Sanseverin*, and his Family alarm'd the Night before ; and lastly, that by her Persuasions he had resolv'd to send her to a Monastery, to which she must prepare herself to go in a few Days without taking any leave even of her Father. Have you (cry'd *Amena*, hastily interrupting her) have you prevail'd with my Father, to send me from this hated Place without the Punishment of hearing his Upbraidings ? Which the other answering in the Affirmative, I thank you, resum'd *Amena*, that Favour has cancell'd all your Source of Cruelty ; for after the Follies I have been guilty of, nothing is so dreadful as the Sight of him. And, who would, Oh Heavens ! (continu'd she, bursting into a Flood of Tears) wish to stay in a World so full of Falshood ! She was able to utter no more for some Moments ; but at last, raising herself on the Bed where she was laid, and endeavouring to seem a little more compos'd ; I have two Favours, Madam, yet to ask of you (rejoin'd she) neither of them will, I believe, seem difficult to you to grant ; That you will make use of the Power you have with my Father, to let my Departure be as sudden as possible, and that while I am here, I may never see Count *D'Elmont*. It was not likely that *Alovisa* should deny Requests so suitable to her own Inclinations ; and believing, with a great deal of Reason, that her Presence was not very grateful, left her to the Care of her Women, whom she order'd to attend her with the same Diligence as herself. It was Evening before the Count came, and *Alovisa* spent the Remainder of the Day in very uneasy

early Reflections; she knew not, as yet, whether she had Cause to rejoice in, or blame her Fortune in so unexpectedly discovering her Passion, and an incessant Vicissitude of Hope and Fears rack'd her with most intolerable Inquietude, 'till the darling Object of her Wishes appear'd; and tho' the first Sight of him added to her other Passions that of Shame, yet he manag'd his Addresses so well, and so modestly and artfully hinted the Knowledge of his Happiness, that every Sentiment gave place to a new Admiration of the Wonders of his Wit; and if before she lov'd, she now ador'd, and began to think it a kind of Merit in herself, to be sensible of his. He soon put it in her Power to oblige him, by giving her the History of his Brother's Passion for her Sister, and she was not at all backward in assuring him how much she approv'd of it, and that she wou'd write to *Ansellina* by the first Post, to engage her coming to *Paris* with all imaginable Speed. In fine, there was nothing he cou'd ask refus'd, and indeed it would have been ridiculous for her to affect Coyness, after the Testimonies she had long since given him of one of the most violent Passions that ever was: This Fore-knowledge sav'd abundance of Dissimulation on both Sides, and she took care that if he should be wanting in his kind Expressions after Marriage, he should not have it in his Power to pretend (as some Husbands have done) that his Stock was exhausted in a tedious Courtship. Every thing was presently agreed upon, and the Wedding-Day appointed, which was to be as soon as every thing cou'd be got ready to make it magnificent; tho' the Count's Good-Nature made him desirous to learn something of *Amena*, yet he durst not enquire, for fear of giving Umbrage to his intended Bride; but she, imagining the Reason of his Silence, very frankly told him, how she was to be dispos'd of. This Knowledge made no small Addition to his

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Contentment, for had she stay'd in *Paris*, he could expect nothing but continual Jealousies from *Alovisa*; besides, as he really wish'd her happy, tho' he could not make her so, he thought Absence might banish a hopeless Passion from her Heart, and Time and other Objects efface an Idea which could not but be destructive to her Peace. He stay'd at *Alovisa's* House 'till it was pretty late, and perhaps they had not parted in some Hours longer, if his Impatience to inform his Brother of his Success, had not carried him away. The young Chevalier was infinitely more transported at the bare Hopes of being something nearer the Aim of all his Hopes, than *D'Elmont* was at the Assurance of losing his in Possession, and could not forbear rallying him for placing the Ultimate of his Wishes on such a Toy, as he argu'd Woman was; which the Chevalier endeavouring to confute, there began a very warm Dispute, in which, neither of 'em being able to convince the other, Sleep at last interpos'd as a Moderator. The next Day they went together to visit *Alovisa*, and from that time were seldom asunder: But in Compassion to *Amena*, they took what care they could to conceal the Design they had in Hand, and that unhappy Lady was in a few Days, according to her Rival's Contrivance, hurried away, without seeing any of her Friends. When she was gone, and there was no farther need of keeping it a Secret, the News of this great Wedding was immediately spread over the whole Town, and every one talk'd of it as their particular Interests or Affections dictated. All *D'Elmont's* Friends were full of Joy, and he met no inconsiderable Augmentation of it himself, when his Brother received a Letter from *Ansellina*, with an Account, that *Belpine's* Wound was found not dangerous, and that he was in a very fair way of Recovery; and it was concluded, that as soon as the

the Wedding was over, the Chevalier should go in Person to *Amiens*, and fetch his beloved *Ansellina*, in order for a Second, and as much desired Nuptial. There was no Gloom now left to cloud the Gaiety of the happy Day ; nothing could be more grand than the Celebration of it, and *Alovisa* now thought herself at the End of all her Cares. But the Sequel of this glorious Beginning, and what Effect the Despair and Imprecations of *Amena* (when she heard of it) produc'd, shall, with the Continuance of the Chevalier *Brilliant's* Adventures, be faithfully related in the next Part.

End of the FIRST PART.



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LOVE in EXCESS:

OR, THE

FATAL ENQUIRY.

PART the SECOND.

 HE Contentment that appear'd in the Faces of the new-married Pair, added so much to the Impatience of the Chevalier *Brilliant* to see his beloved *Ansellina*, that in a few Days after the Wedding, he took leave of them, and departed for *Amiens*: But as human Happiness is seldom of long Continuance, and *Alovisa* placing the Ultimate of her's in the Possession of her charming Husband, secure of that, despis'd all future Events; 'twas time for Fortune, who long enough had smil'd, now to turn her Wheel, and punish the Presumption that defy'd her Power.

As they were one Day at Dinner, a Messenger came to acquaint Count *D'Elmont* that Monsieur *Frankville* was taken, suddenly, so violently

lently ill, that his Physicians despair'd of his Life; and that he begg'd to speak with him immediately: This Gentleman had been Guardian to the Count during his Minority; and the Care and Faithfulness with which that Trust had been discharg'd, made him, with Reason, to regret the Danger of losing so good a Friend: He delay'd the Visit not a Moment, and found him as the Servant had told him, in a Condition which could cherish no Hopes of Recovery; As soon as he perceiv'd the Count come into the Chamber, he desir'd to be left alone with him, which Order being presently obey'd: My dear Charge, (said he, taking him by the Hand, and pressing it to his trembling Bosom) you see me at the Point of Death; but the Knowledge of your many Virtues, and the Confidence I have that you will not deny the Request I am about to ask, makes me support the Thoughts of it with Moderation. The other assuring him of his Readiness to serve him in any Command, encourag'd the old Gentleman to prosecute his Discourse in this manner: You are not ignorant, my Lord, (rejoin'd he) that my Son (the only one I have) is on his Travels, gone, by my Approbation, and his own Desires, to make the Tour of *Europe*, but I have a Daughter, whose Protection I would entreat you to undertake; her Education in a Monastery has hitherto kept her entirely unacquainted with the Gaieties of the Court, or the Conversation of the *Beau Mond*; and I have sent for her to *Paris*, purposely to introduce her into Company proper for a young Lady, who I never design'd for a Recluse; I know not whether she will be here time enough to close my Eyes, but if you will promise to receive her into your House, and not suffer her artless and unexperienc'd Youth to fall into those Snares which are daily laid for Innocence, and take so far a Care, that neither she, nor the Fortune I leave her,

her, be thrown away upon a Man unworthy of her, I shall die well satisfy'd. *D'Elmont* answer'd this Request with repeated Assurances of fulfilling it, and frankly offer'd, if he had no other Person in whom he rather would confide, to take the Management of the whole Estate he left behind him, till young *Frankville* should return. The anxious Father was transported at this Favour, and thank'd him in Terms full of Gratitude and Affection ; they spent some Hours in settling this Affair, and perhaps had not ended it so soon, if Word had not been brought, that the young Lady, his Daughter, was alighted at the Gate. 'Tis impossible to express the Joy which fill'd the old Gentleman's Heart at this News, and he began afresh to put the Count in mind of what he had promis'd concerning her. As they were in this endearing, tho' mournful, Entertainment, the matchless *Melliora* enter'd ; the Surprise and Grief for her Father's Indisposition (having heard of it but since she came into the House) hindered her from regarding any thing but him, and throwing herself on her Knees by the Bedside, wash'd the Hand which he stretch'd out to raise her with, in a Flood of Tears, accompany'd with Expressions, which, unstudy'd and incoherent as they were, had a Delicacy in 'em, that shew'd her Wit not inferior to her Tenderness, and that no Circumstance could render her otherwise than the most lovely Person in the World. When the first Transports of her Sorrow were over, and that with much ado she was persuaded to rise from the Posture she was in : The Affliction I see thee in, my dear Child, (said the Father) would be a vast Addition to the Agonies I feel, were I not so happy as to be provided with Means for a Mitigation of it ; think not in losing me thou wilt be left wholly an Orphan ; this worthy Lord will dry thy Tears : Therefore my last Commands to thee shall be, to

oblige thee to endeavour to deserve the Favours he is pleas'd to do us in accepting thee for — He would have proceeded, but his Physicians (who had been in Consultation in the next Room) coming in prevented him; and Count *D'Elmont* taking the charming *Melliora* by the Hand, led her to the Window, and beginning to speak some Words of Consolation to her, the Softness of his Voice, and graceful Manner with which he deliver'd himself (always the inseparable Companions of his Discourse, but now more particularly so) made her cast her Eyes upon him; but, alas! he was not an Object to be safely gaz'd at, and in spite of the Grief she was in, she found something in his Form which dissipated it; a kind of painful Pleasure, Mixture of Surprise and Joy, and Doubt, ran thro' her in an Instant; her Father's Words suggested to her Imagination, that she was in a Possibility of calling the charming Person that stood before her, by a Name more tender than that of Guardian, and all the Actions, Looks, and Addresses of *D'Elmont* serv'd but to confirm her in that Belief: For now it was, that this Insensible began to feel the Power of Beauty, and that Heart which had so long been impregnable, surrender'd in a Moment; the first Sight of *Melliora* gave him a Discomposure he had never felt before; he sympathiz'd in all her Sorrows, and was ready to join his Tears with hers; but when her Eyes met his, the God of Love seem'd there to have united all his Lightnings for one effectual Blaze; their Admiration of each other's Perfections was mutual, and tho' he had got the Start in Love, as being touch'd with that all-mighty Dart, before her Affliction had given her leave to regard him, yet the Softness of her Soul made up for that little Loss of Time, and it was hard to say whose Passion was the strongest; she listen'd to his Condolence, and Assurances of everlasting

everlasting Friendship, with a Pleasure which was but too visible in her Countenance, and more inflam'd the Count. As they were exchanging Glances, as if each vied with the other who should dart the fiercest Rays, they heard a sort of ominous Whispering about the Bed, and presently one of those who stood near it beckon'd them to come thither; the Physicians had found Monsieur *Frankville* in a much worse Condition than they left him, and soon after perceived evident Symptoms in him of approaching Death; and indeed there were but a very few Moments between him and that other unfathomable World; the Use of Speech had left him, and he could take no other Leave of his Daughter than with his Eyes, which sometimes were cast tenderly on her, sometimes on the Count, with a beseeching Look, as it were to conjure him to be careful of his Charge, then up to Heaven, as Witness of the Trust he repos'd in him. There could not be a Scene more melancholy than this dumb Farewel; and *Melliora*, whose soft Disposition had never before been shock'd, had not Courage to support so dreadful a one as this, but fell upon the Bed, just as her Father breath'd his last, as motionless as he. It is impossible to represent the Agonies which fill'd the Heart of *D'Elmont* at this View; he took her in his Arms, and assisted those who were endeavouring to recover her with a Wildness in his Countenance; a trembling Horror shaking all his Fabrick in such a Manner, as might have easily discover'd to the Spectators (if they had not been too busily employ'd to take notice of it) that he was actuated by a Motive far more powerful than that of Compassion. As soon as she came to herself, they forc'd her from the dead Body of her Father (to which she clung) and carried her into another Room; and it being judg'd

convenient that she should be remov'd from that House; where every thing wou'd serve but to remind her of her Loss, the Count desir'd the Servants of Monsieur *Frankville* should be call'd, and then, in the Presence of 'em all, declar'd their Master's last Request, and order'd an Account of all Affairs shou'd be brought to his House, where he wou'd immediately conduct their young Lady, as he had promis'd to her Father. If *Melliora* had been without any other Cause of Grief, this Eclaircissement had been sufficient to have made her miserable: She had already entertained a most tender Affection for the Count, and had so little Discernment as not to be sensible she had made the like Impression on him; but now she wak'd as from a Dream of promis'd Joys, to certain Woes; and the same Hour which gave birth to her Passion, commenc'd an adequate Despair, and kill'd her Hopes just budding.

INDEED there never was any Condition so truly deplorable as that of this unfortunate Lady; she had just lost a dear and tender Father, whose Care was ever watchful for her; her Brother was far off, and she had no other in the World to apply herself to for Comfort or Advice, not even an Acquaintance at *Paris*, or Friend, but him who but newly was become so, and whom she found it dangerous to make use of, whom she knew it was a Crime to love, yet could not help loving; the more she thought, the more she grew distracted, and the less able to resolve on any thing; a thousand times she call'd on Death to give her Ease; but the pale Tyrant flies from the Pursuer; she had not been yet long enough acquainted with the Ills of Life, and must endure (how unwilling soever) her Part of Sufferings in common with the rest of Human Kind.

As soon as *D'Elmont* had given some necessary Directions to the Servants, he came to the Couch, where she was sitting in a fix'd and silent Sorrow (tho' inwardly toss'd with various and violent Agitations) and offering her his Hand, entreated her to permit him to wait on her from that House of Woe. Alas! said she, to what Purpose shou'd I remove, who bear my Miseries about me? Wretch that I am! — a Flood of Tears here interpos'd, and hinder'd her from proceeding, which falling from such lovely Eyes, had a magnetic Influence to draw the same from every Beholder; but *D'Elmont*, who knew that was not the way to comfort her, dry'd his as soon as possible, and once more begg'd she wou'd depart: Suffer my Return (then answer'd she) to the Monastery, for what have I to do at *Paris*, since I have lost my Father? By no means, Madam (resum'd the Count hastily) that were to disappoint your Father's Designs, and contradict his last Desires; believe, most lovely *Melliora* (continu'd he, taking her by the Hand, and letting fall some Tears which he cou'd not restrain, upon it) that I bear at least an equal Share in your Affliction, and lament for you, and for myself: Such a Regard my grateful Soul paid Monsieur *Frankville* for all his wondrous Care and Goodness to me, that in his Death methinks I am twice an Orphan. But Tears are fruitless to re-inspire his now cold Clay, therefore must transmit the Love and Duty I owed him living, to his Memory dead, and an exact Performance of his Will; and since he thought me worthy of so vast a Trust as *Melliora*, I hope she will be guided by her Father's Sentiments, and believe that *D'Elmont* (tho' a Stranger to her) has a Soul not incapable of Friendship. Friendship! did I say? rejoins'd he, (softning his Voice) that Term is too mean to express a

Zeal like mine, the Care, the Tendernefs, the Faith, the fond Affection of Parents,——Brothers,——Husband,——Lovers, all compriz'd in one, one great unutterable, comprehensive Meaning, is mine for *Melliora*! She return'd no Answer but Sighs, to all he said to her; but he renewing his Entreaties, and urging her Father's Commands, she was at last prevail'd upon to go into his Chariot, which had waited at the Door all the Time of his being there.

As they went, he left nothing unsaid that he believ'd might tend to her Consolation; but she had Griefs, which at present he was a stranger to, and his Conversation, in which she found a thousand Charms, rather increas'd than diminish'd the Trouble she was in: Every Word, every Look of his, was a fresh Dagger to her Heart, and in spite of the Love she bore her Father, and the unfeign'd Concern his sudden Death had given her, she was now convinc'd that Count *D'Elmont*'s Perfections were her severest Wounds.

WHEN they came to his House, he presented her to *Aloviza*, and giving her a brief Account of what had happen'd, engag'd that Lady to receive her with all imaginable Demonstrations of Civility and Kindness.

HE soon left the two Ladies together, pretending Business; but indeed to satisfy his Impatience, which long'd for an Opportunity to meditate on this Adventure. But his Reflections were now grown far less pleasing than they used to be; real Sighs flew from his Breast uncall'd; and *Melliora*'s Image in dazzling Brightness! in terrible Array of killing Charms! fir'd him with (impossible to be attain'd) Desires: He found by sad Experience what it was to love, and to despair. He admir'd! ador'd! and wish'd, even to Madness! yet had too much Honour, too much Gratitude for the Memory of Monsieur *Frankville*; and too

too sincere an Awe for the lovely Cause of his Uneasiness, to form a Thought that cou'd encourage his new Passion. What wou'd he not have given to have been unmarried? How often did he curse the Hour in which *Alovisa's* Fondness was discover'd? And how much more his own Ambition, which prompted him to take Advantage of it and hurry'd him precipitately to a Hymen, where Love (the noblest Guest) was wanting? It was in these Racks of Thought, that the unfortunate *Amena* was remembred, and he could not forbear acknowledging the Justice of that Doom, which inflicted on him these very Torments he had given her. A severe Repentance seiz'd on his Soul, and *Alovisa*, for whom he never had any thing more than an Indifferency, now began to seem distasteful to his Fancy; he look'd on her, as indeed she was, the chief Author of *Amena's* Misfortunes, and abhorr'd her for that Infidelity; but when he consider'd her, as the Bar 'twixt him and *Melliora*, she appear'd like his ill Genius to him, and he cou'd not support the Thoughts of being oblig'd to love her (or at least to seem as if he did) with Moderation. In the midst of these Reflections, his Servant came in, and deliver'd a Letter to him which had been just left by the Post. The Count immediately knew the Hand to be *Amena's*, and was cover'd with the utmost Confusion and Remorse when he read these Lines.



To



To the too Charming and Perfidious
D'ELMONT.

NOW Hopes, and Fears, and Jealousies are over! Doubt is no more! you are for ever lost! and my unfaithful, happy Rival, triumphs in your Arms, and my Undoing! — I need not wish you Joy; the Haste you made to enter into Hymen's Bonds, and the more than ordinary Pomp with which that Ceremony was celebrated, assures me you are highly satisfied with your Condition; and that any future Testimonies of the Friendship of so wretched a Creature as Amena, would be receiv'd by you, with the same Disregard, as those she has given you of a more tender Passion. — Shameful Remembrance! O that I cou'd blot it out! — Erase from the Book of Time those fond deluded Hours! Forget I ever saw the lovely false D'Elmont! Ever listened to his soft persuasive Accents! and thought his Love a mighty Price for Ruin. — My Father writes that you are married, commands my Return to Paris, and assume an Air as gay and chearful as that with which I used to appear. — Alas! how little does he know his Daughter's Heart? and how impossible it is for me to obey him? Can I look on you as the Husband of Alovisa, without remembering you were once the Lover of Amena? Can Love like mine, so fierce, so passionately tender, e'er sink to a calm Indifference? Can I behold the fond Endearments of your bridal Joys (which you'd not be able to restrain, even before me) and not burst with Envy? No, the Sight wou'd turn me quite distracted, and I shou'd commit some desperate Violence that wou'd undo us all. —

There-

The FATAL ENQUIRY. 63

Therefore, I hide myself for ever from it, bid an everlasting Adieu to all the gay Delights and Pleasures of my Youth.—To all the Pomp and Splendor of the Court.—To all that the mistaken World calls Happiness.—To Father, Friends, Relations, all that's dear.—But your Idea, and that, not even these consecrated Walls, nor Iron Grates keep out; sleeping or waking you are ever with me; you mingle with my most solemn Devotions; and while I pray to Heaven that I may think on you no more, a guilty Pleasure rises in my Soul, and contradicts my Vows! All my Confessions are so many Sins, and the same Breath which tells my ghostly Father I abjure your Memory, speaks your dear Name with Transport. Yes—Cruel! Ungrateful! Faithless as you are, I still do love you—Love you to that infinite Degree, that now, methinks, fir'd with thy Charms, (repenting all I've said) I cou'd wish even to renew those Moments of my Ruin!—Pity me, D'Elmont, if thou hast Humanity.—Judge what the Rackings of my Soul must be, when I resolve, with all this Love, this Languishment about me, never to see you more.

Every thing is preparing for my Reception into Holy Orders (how unfit I am, Heaven knows) and in a few Days I shall put on the Veil which excludes me from the World for ever: Therefore, if these distracted Lines are worth an Answer, it must be speedy, or it will not come to my Hands; perhaps not find me living—I can no more—Farewel (thou dear Destroyer of my Soul)

Eternally farewell,

AMENA.

P. S. I do not urge you to write, Alovisa (I wish I could not say your Wife) will perhaps think it too great a Condescension, and not suffer you so long from her Embraces.—Yet if you can get loose—But you know best what's proper to be done ——— Forgive the Restlessness of a despairing
Wretch,

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Wretch, who cannot cease to love, tho' from this Moment she must cease to tell you so.—Once more and for ever,

Adieu.

HAD this Letter come a Day sooner, 'tis probable it would have had but little Effect on the Soul of *D'Elmont*; but his Sentiments of Love were now so wholly chang'd, that what before he wou'd but have laugh'd at, and perhaps despis'd, now fill'd him with Remorse and Anguish. He read it over several times, and found so many Proofs in it of a sincere and constant Affection, that he began to pity her with a Tenderness like that of a Relation, but no more. The charming *Melliora* had engross'd all his sonder Wishes, else it is not impossible but that *Alovisa* might have had more Reason to fear her Rivalship after Marriage than before. That Lady having been without the Presence of her dear Husband some Hours, had not Patience to remain any longer without seeing him; and making an Excuse to *Melliora* for leaving her alone, came running to the Closet where he was; how unwelcome she was grown, the Reader may imagine; he receiv'd her, not as he was wont; the Gaiety which used to sparkle in her Eyes (at once declaring and creating amorous Desires) now gave place to a sullen Gloominess; he look'd not on her, or if by chance he did, 'twas more with Anger than with Love; in spite of his Endeavours to conceal it, she was too quick-sighted (as all are that truly love) not to be sensible of this Alteration. However, she took no notice of it, but kissing and embracing him (according to her Custom, when-ever they were alone) begg'd him to leave his solitary Amusement, and help to comfort the afflicted Lady he brought there. Her Endearments serv'd but to increase his Peevishness, and heighten her Surprise at his Behaviour; and

and indeed, the Moment that she enter'd the Closet, was the last of her Tranquility.

WHEN with much Persuasions she had prevail'd with him to go with her into the Room where *Melliora* was, he appear'd so disorder'd at the second Sight of that Charmer, as wou'd certainly have let *Aloviza* into the secret of his Passion, had she not been retir'd to a Window to recover herself from the Confusion her Husband's Coldness had thrown her in; and by that fortunate Disregard of his Looks at the critical Instant, given him (who never wanted Presence of Mind) leave to form both his Countenance and Manner of Address, so as to give no Suspicion of the Truth.

THIS little Company was very far from being entertaining to one another; every one had their particular Cogitations, and were not displeas'd not to be interrupted in them. It growing late, *Aloviza* conducted *Melliora* to a Chamber which she had order'd to be prepar'd for her, and then retir'd to her own. Hoping that when the Count shou'd come to bed, she might be able to make some Discovery of the Cause of his Uneasiness; but she was deceiv'd, he spoke not to her, and when by a thousand little Inventions she urg'd him to reply to what she said, it was in such a Fashion as only let her see, that he was extremely troubled at something, but could not guess at what. As soon as Day broke, he rose, and shutting himself into his Closet, left her in the greatest Consternation imaginable; she cou'd not think it possible that the Death of Monsieur *Frankville* shou'd work this Transformation, and knew of no other Misfortune that had happened; at last she remembered she had heard one of the Servants say, a Letter was brought to their Master by the Post, and began to reflect on every Thing (in the Power of *Fortune* to determine) that cou'd threaten a Disturbance, yet was still as ignorant as ever. She lay not long

66 LOVE in EXCESS: or,

long in Bed, but putting on her Cloaths with more Expedition than usual, went to the Closet, resolving to speak to him in a Manner as shou'd oblige him to put an End to the Uncertainty she was in; but finding the Door lock'd, her Curiosity made her look thro' the Key-hole, and she saw him sometimes very earnestly reading a Letter, and sometimes writing, as tho' it were an Answer to it. A sudden Thought came into her Head, and she immediately went softly from the Place where she was, without knocking at the Door, and stay'd in a little Chamber adjacent to it, where none cou'd pass to or from the Closet, without being perceiv'd by her; she had not waited long, before she heard the Count ring, and presently saw a Servant enter, and soon after return with a Letter in his Hand; she would not speak to him then, for fear of being over-heard by her Husband; but followed him down Stairs, and when he came towards the Bottom, call'd to him in a low Voice to tarry till she came to him; the Fellow durst not but obey, and there being no body near 'em, commanded him to deliver her the Letter: But he, either afraid or unwilling to betray his Trust, excus'd himself from it as well as he cou'd, but she was resolv'd to have it; and when Threats would not avail, condescended to Entreaties, to which she added Bribes; which last Article, join'd to the Promise she made of never revealing it, won him to her Purpose. She had scarce Patience to forbear opening it before she got to her Chamber; the Superscription (which she saw was for *Amena*) fir'd her with Disdain and Jealousy, and it is hardly possible to imagine, and much less to describe, the Torrent of her Indignation, when she found that it contain'd these Words.



To the Lovely AMENA.

YOU accuse me of Cruelty, when at the same time you kill me with yours: How vile, how despicable must I be grown in your Opinion, when you believe I can be happy, when you are miserable!—Can I enjoy the Pleasures of a Court, while you are shut within a Cloyster?—Shall I suffer the World to be depriv'd of such a Treasure as Amena, for the Crime of worthless D'Elmont?—No, no; fair injur'd Softness, return, and bless the Eyes of every Beholder! Shine out again in your native Lustre, unclips'd by Grief, the Star of Beauty! and the Guide of Love.—And, if my unlucky Presence will be a Damp to the Brightness of your Fires, I will for ever quit the Place.—Tho' I cou'd wish you'd give me leave sometimes to gaze upon you, and draw some hop'd Presages of future Fortune from the Benignity of your Influence.—Yes, Amena, I wou'd sigh out my Repentance at your Feet, and try at least to obtain a Pardon for my Infidelity.—For 'tis true what you have heard,—I am marry'd.—But oh! Amena, Happiness is not always an Attendant on Hymen.—However, I yet may call you Friend—I yet may love you, tho' in a different Way from what I once pretended to; and believe me, that the Love of Souls, as it is the most uncommon, especially in our Sex, so 'tis the most refin'd and noble of all Passions, and such a Love shall be for ever yours. Even Alovisa (who has robb'd you of the rest) cannot justly resent my giving you that Part.—You'll wonder at this Alteration in my Temper, but 'tis sincere; I am no more the gay, the raving D'Elmont; and when you come to Paris,

Paris, perhaps you will find me in a Condition more deserving your Pity than Indignation. What shall I say, Amena? My Crime is my Punishment; I have offended against Love, and against you, and am, if possible, as miserable, as guilty: Torn with Remorse and tortur'd with—I cannot—must not name it—'tis something which can be term'd no other than the utmost Severity of my Fate.—Haste then to pity me, to comfort, to advise me, if (as you say) you yet retain any Remains of your former Tenderneſs for this ungrateful Man.

D'ELMONT.

UNGRATEFUL indeed! cry'd *Alovisa*, (transported with Exceſs of Rage and Jealouſy) Oh the Villain!—What Miſeries! What Miſfortunes are theſe thou talk'ſt of? What Unhappineſs has wait'd on thy *Hymen*? 'Tis I alone am wretched! baſe Deceiver!

THEN, as if ſhe wanted to diſcover ſomething farther to heighten the Indignation ſhe was in, ſhe began to read it over again; and indeed the more ſhe conſider'd the Meaning of what ſhe read, the more her Paſſions ſwell'd, till they got at laſt the entire Dominion of her Reaſon: She tore the Letter in a thouſand Pieces, and was not much leſs unmerciful to her Hair and Garments. 'Tis poſſible, that in the Violence of her Fury, ſhe might have forgot her Promiſe to the Servant, to vent ſome part of it on her Husband, if her Women, coming into the Room to know if ſhe was ready to dreſs, had not prevented her, by telling her the Count was gone abroad, and had left Word, that he ſhould not return 'till the Evening. *Aloviſa* had thrown herſelf on the Bed, and the Curtains being drawn, diſcover'd not the Diſorder ſhe was in, and which her Pride made her willing ſhould be ſtill a Secret; therefore diſmiſs'd her with ſaying,

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ing, she would call her when she wanted any thing. Though *Alovisa* was too apt to give a loose to her Passions on every Occasion, to the Destruction of her own Peace, yet she knew well enough how to disguise 'em, whenever she found the concealing of them would be an Advantage to her Designs : And when the Transports of her Rage were so far over, as to give her Liberty of Reflection, and she began to examine the State of her Affection to the Count, she soon perceiv'd it had so much the better of all other Considerations, that in Spite of the Injustice she thought him guilty of to her, she could not persuade herself to do any thing that might give him a Pretence to quarrel with her : She thought she had done enough in intercepting this Letter, and did not doubt but that *Amena* would take his not writing to her so much to Heart as to prevent her ever returning to *Paris*, and resolv'd to omit nothing of her former Endearments, or makè a Shew of being in the least disoblig'd ; this Sort of Carriage, she imagin'd, would not only lay him more open and unguarded to the diligent Watch she design'd to make on all his Words and Actions, but likewise awaken him to a just Sense of her Goodness, and his own Ingratitude. — She rightly judg'd, that when People are marry'd, Jealousy was not a proper Method to revive a decay'd Passion, and that after Possession it must be only Tenderness, and constant Assiduity to please, that can keep up Desire fresh and gay : Man is too arbitrary a Creature to bear the least Contradiction, where he pretends an absolute Authority ; and that Wife who thinks by ill Humour and perpetual Taunts, to make him weary of what she would reclaim him from, only renders herself more hateful, and makes that justifiable, which before was blameable in him. These, and the like Considerations made *Alovisa* put on a Countenance of Serenity, and she so well acted the Part
of

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of an unsuspecting Wife, that *D'Elmont* was far from imagining what she had done: However he still behav'd with the same Caution as before, to *Melliora*; and certainly never did People disguise the Sentiments of their Souls more artfully than did these three. ——— *Melliora* veil'd her secret Languishments under the Covert of her Grief for her Father; the Count his burning Anguish, in a gloomy Melancholy for the Loss of his Friend; but *Alovisa*'s Task was much the hardest, who had no Pretence for Grief, (raging, and bleeding with neglected Love, and stifled Pride) to frame her Temper to a seeming Tranquillity — All made it their whole Study to deceive each other, yet none but *Alovisa* was entirely in the dark; for the Count and *Melliora* had but too true a guess at one another's Meaning; every Look of his (for he had Eyes that needed no Interpreter) gave her Intelligence of his Heart, and the Confusion which the understanding these Looks gave her, sufficiently told him how sensible she was of 'em. — Several Days they liv'd in this manner, in which time Monsieur *Frankville* was interr'd. Which Solemnity the Count took care should be perform'd with a Magnificence suitable to the Friendship he publickly profess'd to have born him, and the secret Adoration his Soul paid to his Remains.

NOTHING happened of moment, 'till a Day or two after the Funeral; a Gentleman newly arriv'd at *Paris*, came to visit the Count, and gave him an Account of *Amena*'s having taken the Habit; How, (said *D'Elmont*, interrupting him) is it possible! — Has she then profess'd! Yes, answer'd the Gentleman, having a Sister, whom I always tenderly lov'd, at the Monastery at *St. Dennis*, my Affection oblig'd me to make it in my Way to visit her. *Amena* was with her at the Grate when she receiv'd me; I know not how,

among

among other Discourses, we happen'd to talk of the fine Gentlemen of *Paris*, which it was impossible to do, without mentioning Count *D'Elmont*. The Count answer'd not this Compliment as he would have done at another Time, but only bowing with an humble Air, gave him Liberty to prosecute his Discourse ; The Moment (resum'd he) that *Amena* heard your Name, the Tears run from her fair Eyes, in such Abundance, and she seem'd oppress'd with so violent a Grief, that she was not able to stay any longer with us. When she was gone, my Sister, whom she had made her Confident, gave me the History of her Misfortunes, and withal, told me, that the next Day she was to be initiated into Holy Orders. My Curiosity engag'd me to stay at *St. Dennis*, to see the Ceremony perform'd, which was solemn ; but not with that Magnificence which I expected ; it seems it was *Amena's* Desire that it should be as private as possible, and for that Reason, none of her Relations were there, and several of the Formalities of Entrance omitted : After it was over, my Sister beckon'd me to come to the Grate, where I saw her before, and conjur'd me in the Name of her new Sister, to give this to your Hands : In speaking these Words, he took a Letter out of his Pocket, which the Count immediately opening, to his great Surprise found it contain'd as follows.



To the Inhuman D'ELMONT.

TO be pity'd by you, and that you should tell me
 so, was all the Recompence I ask'd for Loss of
 Father, Friends, Reputation, and eternal Peace ;
 but now, too late, I find, that the fond Maid who
 scorns

scorns the World for Love, is sure to meet for her Reward the Scorn of him she loves—Ungrateful Man! Could you not spare one Moment from that long Date of Happiness to give a last Farewel to her you have undone! What would not this barbarous Contempt have drawn upon you, were I of Alovisa's Temper? Sure I am, all that Disdain and Rage could inspire Malice with, had been inflicted on you, but you well know my Soul is of another Stamp—Fool that I was, and little vers'd in the base Arts of Man, believ'd I might, by Tenderneſs and faithful Friendship, gain Esteem, tho' Wit and Beauty, the two great Provocatives to create Love, were wanting. But do not think that I am yet so mean as to desire to hear from you; no, I have put all future Correspondence with you out of my Power, and hope to drive it even from my Wish: Whether your Disdain, or the holy Banner I am lifted under, has wrought this Effect, I know not, but methinks I breathe another Air, think on you with more Tranquillity, and bid you, without dying,

Eternally adieu, AMEN.

P. S. *Let Alovisa know I am no more her Rival: Heaven has my Soul, and I forgive you both.*

D'ELMONT was strangely fir'd at the reading these Lines, which left him no Room to doubt that his Letter had miscarried; he could not presently imagine by what Means, but was resolv'd, if possible, to find it out. However, he dissembled his Thoughts till the Gentleman had taken his leave; then calling for the Servant, whom he had entrusted with the carrying it, he took him by the Throat, and holding his drawn Sword directly to his Breast, swore that Moment should be his last, if he did not immediately confess the Truth: The poor Fellow, frighted almost to Death, trembling

trembling, and falling on his Knees, implor'd Forgiveness, and discover'd all. *Alovisa*, who was in the next Chamber, hearing her Husband call for that Servant, with a Tone somewhat more imperious than what he was accusom'd to, and a great Noise soon after, imagin'd some Accident had happen'd to betray her, and ran in to know the Certainty, just as the Count had discharged the Servant, at once from his Service and his Presence. You have done well, Madam, (said *D'Elmont*, looking on her with Eyes sparkling with Indignation) you have done well, by your impertinent Curiosity and Imprudence, to rouse me from my Dream of Happiness, and remind me, that I am that wretched Thing a Husband! 'Tis well indeed (answer'd *Alovisa*, who saw now that there was no need of farther Dissimulation) that any thing can make you remember, both what you are, and what I am. You (resum'd he, hastily interrupting her) have taken an effectual Method to prove yourself a Wife! — a very Wife! — insolent — jealous — and censorious! — But, Madam, (continued he, frowning) since you are pleas'd to assert your Privilege, be assur'd, I too shall take my turn, and will exert the—Husband! In saying this, he flung out of the Room, in spite of her Endeavours to hinder him; and going hastily thro' a Gallery which had a large Window that look'd into the Garden, he perceiv'd *Melliora* lying on a green Bank, in a melancholy, but a charming Posture, directly opposite to the Place where he was; her Beauties appear'd, if possible, more to Advantage than ever he had seen them, or at least he had more Opportunity thus unseen by her, to gaze upon 'em; he in a Moment lost all the Rage of Temper he had been in, and his whole Soul was taken up with Softness; he stood for some Moments fix'd in silent Admiration; but Love has small Dominion in a Heart, that can content itself with a distant Prospect, and there being a Pair of

Back-stairs at the farther End of the Gallery, which led to the Garden ; he either forgot, or not regarded what Construction *Alovisa* might make of this private Interview, if by chance, from any of the Windows she should be a Witness of it.

MELLIORA was so intent on a Book she had in her Hand, that she saw not the Count till he was close enough to her to discern what was the Subject of her Entertainment, and finding it the Works of Monsieur *L'Fontenelle* ; Philosophy, Madam, at your Age (said he to her with an Air which express'd Surprize) is as wonderous as your own Excellencies ; but I am confident, had this Author ever seen *Melliora*, his Sentiments had been otherwise than now they seem to be, and he would have been able to write of nothing else but Love and Her. *Melliora* blush'd extremely at his unexpected Presence, and the Compliment he made her ; but recollecting herself as soon as she could ; I have a better Opinion of Monsieur *L'Fontenelle* (answer'd she) ; but if I were really Mistress of as many Charms as you would make me believe, I should think myself little beholden to Nature, for bestowing them on me, if by their Means I were depriv'd of so choice an Improvement as this Book has given me. Thank Heaven, then, Madam (resum'd he) that you were born in an Age successive to that which has produc'd so many fine Treatises of this kind for your Entertainment ; since (I am very confident) this, and a long Space of future Time will have no other Theme, but that which at present you seem so much averse to. *Melliora* found so much Difficulty in endeavouring to conceal the Disorder she was in at this Discourse, that it rendered her unable to reply ; and he, who possibly guess'd the Occasion of her Silence, taking one of her Hands, and tenderly pressing it between his, look'd so full in her Eyes, as heighten'd her Confusion.

fusion, and discover'd to his ravish'd View what most he wish'd to find. Ambition, Envy, Hate, Fear, or Anger, every other Passion that finds Entrance in the Soul, Art and Discretion may disguise; but Love, tho' it may be feign'd, can never be conceal'd; not only the Eyes (those true and most perfect Intelligencers of the Heart) but every Feature, every Faculty betrays it? It fills the whole Air of the Person possess'd with it; it wanders round the Mouth! plays in the Voice! trembles in the Accent! and shews itself a thousand different, nameless Ways! Even *Melliora's* Care to hide it, made it more apparent, and the transported *D'Elmont*, not considering where he was, or who might be a Witness of his Rapture, could not forbear catching her in his Arms, and grasping her with an Extacy, which plainly told her what his Thoughts were, tho' at that time he had not Power to put 'em into Words; and indeed there is no greater Proof of a vast and elegant Passion, than the being incapable of expressing it.—He had perhaps held her in this strict Embrace till some Accident had discover'd and separated him from her, if the Alarm this manner of Proceeding gave her Modesty, had not made her force herself from him.—They both stood in a silent Consternation, nor was he much less disorder'd at the Temerity, the Violence of his ungovernable Passion had made him guilty of, than she was at the Liberty he had taken; he knew not how to excuse nor she to reproach; Respect (the constant Attendant on a sincere Affection) had ty'd his Tongue, and Shame, mixed with the Uncertainty after what manner she should resent it, hers. At last, the natural Confidence of his Sex encouraged him to break this mute Entertainment.—There are Times, Madam, (said he) in which the wisest have not Power over their own Actions—if therefore I have offended, impute not the Crime to

me, but that unavoidable Impulse, which for a Moment hurry'd me from myself; for 'be assur'd while *D'Elmont* can command his Thoughts, they shall be most obedient to your Wishes.—As *Melliora* was about to reply, she saw a Servant coming hastily to speak to the Count, and was not a little glad of so favourable an Opportunity to retire without being obliged to continue a Discourse in which she must either lay a severe Punishment on her Inclinations by making a Quarrel with him, or by forgiving him too easily a Trespas against the strict Precepts of Virtue she had always profess'd: She made what Haste she could into her Chamber, and carry'd with her a World of troubled Meditations; she now no longer doubted of the Count's Passion, and trembled with the Apprehension of what he might in time be prompted to; but when she reflected how dear that Person she had so much cause to fear, was to her, she thought herself at once the most unfortunate and most guilty of her Sex.

THE Servant who gave 'em this seasonable Interruption, deliver'd a Letter to his Master, which he opening hastily, knowing that it came from his Brother by the Seal, found the Contents as follow.

I Hop'd (my dearest Friend and Brother) by this Day to have embrac'd you; but Fortune takes Delight to disappoint our Wishes, when highest rais'd and nearest to their Aim.—The Letter I carry'd from her, whom I think it my Happiness to call Sister, join'd with my own Faith, Love and Affiduity, at length triumph'd over all the little Niceties and Objections my Charmer made against our Journey, and she condescended to order every thing requisite for our Departure from Amiens should be got ready.—But how shall I express the Grief, the Horror, the Distraction

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of my Soul, when the very Evening before the Day we should have set out, as I was sitting with her, a sudden, but terrible Illness, like the Hand of Death, seiz'd on her, she fell (Oh my Brother) cold and speechless in my Arms---Guess what I endur'd at that afflicting Moment; all that I had of Man or Reason left me; and sure, had not the Care of the Baroness and some other Ladies (whom my Cries drew in to her Assistance) in a little time recover'd her, I had not now surviv'd to give you this Account: Again I saw the Beauties of her Eyes! again I heard her Voice! but her Disorder was yet so great, that it was thought convenient she should be put to bed; the Baroness seeing my Despair, desir'd me not to quit her House, and by that means I had News every Hour, how her Fever increas'd or abated, for the Physicians being desired to deal freely, assured us that was her Distemper: For several Days she continu'd in a Condition that could give us no Hopes of her Recovery; in which time, as you may imagine, I was little capable of writing---The Wildness of my unruly Grief, made me not be permitted to come into her Chamber; but they could not, without they had made use of Force, hinder me from lying at her Door; I counted all her Groans, heard every Sigh the Violence of her Pain drew from her, and watch'd the Countenance of every Person who came out of her Chamber, as Men who would form a Judgment of future Consequences, do the Signs in Heaven---But I trouble you with this tedious Recital; she is now, if there is any Dependance on the Doctor's Skill, past Danger, tho' not fit to travel, at least this Month, which gives no small Alleviation to the Greatness of my Joys (which otherwise would be unbounded) for her Recovery, since it occasions so long a Separation from the best of Brothers, and of Friends: Farewell, may all your Wishes meet Success, and an eternal Round of Happiness attend you: to add to mine, I beg you'll write by the first Post, which, next to seeing you, is the greatest I can taste. I am, my Lord, with all

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imaginable Tendernefs and Respect, your most affectionate Brother and humble Servant,

BRILLIAN.

THE Count judg'd it proper that *Alovisa* should see this Letter, because it so much concern'd her Sister, and was ordering the Servant to carry it to her (not being himself willing to speak to her) just as she was coming towards him : She had receiv'd a Letter from the Baroness *D' Beronville*, at the same time that the Chevalier *Brillian's* was brought, and was glad to take the Opportunity of communicating the Contents of it, in hopes by this Conversation to be reconcil'd to her Husband. But the gloomy Sullenness of the Humour he had left her with, return'd at Sight of her ; and after some little Discourse of Family Affairs, which he could not avoid answering, walk'd carelessly away : She follow'd him at a Distance, 'till he was got to the Gallery, and perceiving he went toward his Closet, mended her Pace, and was close to him when he was going in. My Lord (said she) with a Voice but half assured, and which would not have given her leave to utter more, if he had not interrupted her, by telling her he would be alone, and shutting the Door hastily upon her ; but she prevented his locking of it, by pushing against it with all her Force, and he, not exerting his for fear of hurting her, suffer'd her Entrance ; but look'd on her with a Countenance so forbidding, as, in spite of the natural Haughtiness of her Temper, and the Resolution she had made to speak to him, render'd her unable for some Moments to bring forth a Word ; but the silent Grief which appear'd in her Face, pleaded more with the Good-Nature of the Count, than any thing she could have said : He began to pity the Unhappiness of her too violent Affection, and to wish himself in a Capacity

of

of returning it ; however, he (like other Husbands) thought it best to keep up his Resentments, and take this Opportunity of quelling all the *Woman* in her Soul, and humbling all the little Remains of Pride that Love had left her. Madam (resum'd he, with an Accent which, tho' something more soften'd, was still imperious enough) if you have any thing of Consequence to impart to me, I desire you will be as brief as you can, for I would be left to the Freedom of my Thoughts.—

Alonisa could not yet answer, but letting fall a Shower of Tears, and throwing herself on the Ground, embraced his Knees with so passionate a Tenderness, as sufficiently express'd her Repentance for having been guilty of any thing to disoblige him. *D'Elmont* was most sensibly touch'd at this Behaviour, so vastly different from what he could have expected from the Greatness of her Spirit ; and raising her with an obliging Air, I am sorry (said he) that any thing should happen to occasion this Submission ; but since what's past is out of either of our Powers to recall, I shall endeavour to think of it no more, provided you'll promise me never for the future to be guilty of any thing which may give me an Uneasiness by the Sight of yours — 'Tis impossible to represent the Transport of *Alonisa* at this kind Expression ; she hung upon his Neck, kissed the dear Mouth which had pronounc'd her Pardon, with Raptures of unspeakable Delight ; she sigh'd with Pleasure, as before she had done with Pain ; she wept ; she even dy'd with Joy : — No, no, my Lord, my Life, my Angel, (cry'd she, as soon as she had Power to speak) I never will offend you more, no more be jealous, no more be doubtful of my Happiness ! you are ! — you will be only mine, I know you will — Your kind Forgiveness of my Folly assures me that you are mine, not more by Duty than by Love ; a Tie far more valuable than that of Marriage. The

Count, conscious of her Mistake, had much ado to conceal his Disorder at these Words; and being unwilling she should proceed, as soon as he could (without seeming unkind or rude) disengag'd himself from her Arms, and took a Pen in his Hand, which he told her he was about to employ in answering the Chevalier *Brilliant's* Letter: *Aloviza*, who now resolv'd an entire Obedience to his Will, and remembring he had desired to be alone, withdrew, full of the Idea of an imagin'd Felicity—Her Heart was now at ease, she believ'd that if her Husband had any Remains of Passion for *Amena*, the Impossibility of ever seeing her again, would soon extinguish them; and since she was so happily reconciled, was far from repenting her intercepting of his Letter: But, poor Lady, she did not long enjoy this Peace of Mind, and this Interval of Tranquility serv'd but to heighten her ensuing Miseries.

THE Count's secret Passion for *Melliora* grew stronger by his endeavouring to suppress it; and perceiving that she carefully avoided all Opportunities of being alone with him one Moment since his Behaviour to her in the Garden, he grew almost distracted with the continual Restraint he was forc'd to put on all his Words and Actions: He durst not sigh nor send an amorous Glance, for fear of offending her, and alarming his Wife's Jealousy, so lately lull'd to sleep. He had no Person in whom he had Confidence enough to trust with his Misfortune, and had certainly sunk under the Pressure of it, if *Aloviza*, who observing an Alteration in his Countenance and Humour, fearing he was really indisposed (which was the Excuse he made for his Melancholy) had not perswaded him to go into the Country, hoping that Change of Air might do him good. He had a very fine Seat near *Anierville*, in the Province of *Le Beauffe*, which he had

not

not been at for some Years, and he was very willing to comply with *Alovisa's* Desires of passing the Remainder of the Summer in a Solitude, which was now become agreeable to him; the greatest Difficulty was in persuading *Melliora* to accompany them thither; he guess'd, by her reserv'd Behaviour, that she only waited an Opportunity to leave the Place where he was, and was not mistaken in his Conjecture. One Day as they were talking of it, she told them she was resolv'd to return to the Monastery where she had been educated, that the World was too noisy a Place for one of her Taste, who had no Relish for any of the Diversions of it. Every Word she spoke, was like a Dagger to *D'Elmont's* Heart; yet he so artfully manag'd his Endeavours, between the Authority of a Guardian, and the Entreaties of a Friend, that she was at last overcome. 'Tis hard for the severest Virtue to deny themselves the Sight of the Person belov'd; and whatsoever Resolutions we make, there are but few, who, like *Melliora*, might not by such a Lover be prevail'd upon to break them.

As soon as their coming into the Country was spread abroad, they were visited by all the Neighbouring People of Quality, but there was none so welcome to *D'Elmont* as the Baron *D'Espernay*; they had before the Count's going into the Army been very intimate Acquaintance, and were equally glad of this Opportunity to renew a Friendship, which Time and Absence had not intirely erased. The Baron had a Sister, young and very agreeable, but gay even to Coquetry; they liv'd together, being both single, and he brought her with him, hearing the Count was married, to visit his Lady: There were several other young Noblemen and Ladies there at the same time, and the Conversation grew so delightfully entertaining, that it was impossible for Persons less prepossess'd than the

Count and *Melliora*, to retain their Chagrin; but, tho' there were scarce any in the Company that might not have listened with a pleas'd Attention, to what those two admirable Persons were capable of saying, yet their secret Sorrows kept them both in Silence, till *Melantha*, for that was the Name of the Baron's Sister, took upon her to divert the Company with some Verses on Love; which she took out of her Focket-Book and read to 'em: Every Body extoll'd the Softness of the Stile, and the Subject they were upon. But *Melliora*, who was willing to take all Opportunities of condemning that Passion, as well to conceal it in herself as to check whatever Hopes the Count might have, now discover'd the Force of her Reason, the Delicacy of her Wit, and the Penetration of her Judgment, in a Manner so sweetly surprizing to all that were Strangers to her, that they presently found, that it was not want of noble and truly agreeable Thoughts or Words to express 'em, that had so long depriv'd them of the Pleasure of hearing her; she urg'd the Arguments she brought against the giving way to Love, and the Danger of all softening Amusements, with such a becoming Fierceness, as made every Body of the Opinion, that she was born only to create Desire, not be susceptible of it herself. The Count, as he was most concern'd, took the most particular Notice of all she said, and was not a little alarm'd to see her appear so much in earnest, but durst not answer, or endeavour to confute her, because of *Alovisa's* Presence: But it was not long before he had an Opportunity; a few Days after he met with one as full as he could wish. Returning one Evening from the Baron *D'Espernay's*, whom he had now made the Confident of his Passion, and who had encourag'd him in it, he was told that *Alovisa* was gone out to take the Air, and hearing no mention of *Melliora's* being

being with her, he stay'd not to enquire, but running directly to her Chamber made his Eyes his best Informers: He found her lying on a Couch in a most charming Dishabille; she had but newly come from bathing, and her Hair unbraided, hung down about her Shoulders with a Negligence more beautiful than all the Aids of Art could form in the most exact Decorum of Dress; Part of it fell upon her Neck and Breast, and with its lovely Shadiness, being of a delicate dark Brown, set off to vast Advantage the matchless Whiteness of her Skin: Her Gown and the rest of her Garments were white, and all ungirt, and loosely flowing, discover'd a thousand Beauties, which modish Formalities conceal. A Book lay open by her, on which she had reclin'd her Head, as if been tir'd with reading. She blush'd at Sight of the Count, and rose from off the Couch with a Confusion which gave new Lustre to her Charms; but he not permitting her to stir from the Place she was in, sat down by her, and casting his Eyes on the Book which lay there, found it to be *Ovid's Epistles*; how Madam, cry'd he, not a little pleas'd with the Discovery, dare you, who the other Day so warmly inveigh'd against Writings of this Nature, trust yourself with so dangerous an Amusement? How happens it, that you are so suddenly come over to our Party? Indeed my Lord, (answer'd she, growing more disorder'd) it was Chance rather than Choice, that directed this Book to my Hands; I am yet far from approving Subjects of this kind, and believe I shall be ever so: Not that I can see any Danger in it, as to myself; the Retirement I have always liv'd in, and the little Propensity I find to entertain a Thought of that uneasy Passion, has hitherto secur'd me from any Prepossession, without which *Ovid's Art* is vain. Nay, Madam, reply'd the Count, now you contradict your former Argument, which was, that these sort of

Books were, as it were, Preparatives to Love, and by their softening Influence, melted the Soul, and made it fit for amorous Impressions, and so far you certainly were in the Right; for when once the Fancy is fixed on a real Object, there will be no need of auxilliary Forces, the dear Idea will spread itself through every Faculty of the Soul, and in a Moment inform us better than all the Writings of the most experienc'd Poets could do in an Age. Well, my Lord, said she, (endeavouring to compose herself) I am utterly unambitious of any Learning this Way, and shall endeavour to retain in Memory, more of the Misfortunes that attend the Passion of *Sappho*, than the tender, though never so elegant Expressions it produced. And if all Readers of Romances took this Method, the Votaries of *Cupid* would be fewer, and the Dominion of Reason more extensive. You speak (answer'd *D'Elmont*) as though Love and Reason were incompatible. There is no Rule, (said she) my Lord, without Exception; they are indeed sometimes united, but how often they are at Variance, where may we not find Proofs? History is full of 'em, and daily Examples of the many hare-brain'd Matches, and Slips, much less excuseable, sufficiently evince how little Reason has to do in the Affairs of Love; I mean (continu'd she, with a very serious Air) 'that Sort of Love, for there are two, which hurries People on to an immediate Gratification of their Desires, tho' never so prejudicial to themselves, or the Person they pretend to love. Pray, Madam, (said the Count, a little nettled at this Discourse) what Love is that which seems at least to merit the Approbation of a Lady so extremely nice? It has many Branches (reply'd she); in the first Place, that which we owe to Heaven, in the next to our King, our Country, Parents, Kindred, Friends; and lastly, that which Fancy inclines, and Reason guides

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guides us to in a Partner for Life; but here every Circumstance must agree, Parity of Age, of Quality of Fortune, and of Humour, Consent of Friends, and equal Affection in each other; for if any one of these Particulars fail, it renders all the rest of no Effect. Ah, Madam, (cry'd the Count, not able to suffer her to proceed) what Share of Pity then can you afford a Man, who loves where almost all these Circumstances are wanting, and what Advice would you give a Wretch so curs'd? I would have him *think* (said she, more gravely than before). How, Madam, (resum'd he) *think*, did you say? Alas! 'tis Thought that has undone him. That's very possible (answer'd she); but yet 'tis want of thinking justly; for in a Lover's Mind Illusions seem Realities, and what at another time would be look'd on as impossible, appears easy then: They indulge, and feed their new-born Folly with a Prospect of Hope, tho' never so distant a one; and in the vain Pursuit of it, fly Consideration, till Despair starts up in the Midway, and bars their promis'd View; whereas if they gave way to due Reflection, the Vanity of the Attempt would presently be shewn, and the same Cause that bid 'em cease to hope, would bid 'em cease to wish. Ah! Madam, (said he) how little do you know of that Passion, and how easily could I disprove you, by the Example of my Friend; Despair and Love are of an equal Age in him, and from the first Moment he beheld his adorable Charmer, he has languish'd without the least Mixture of a flattering Hope. I grant the Flames with which our modern Gallants are ordinarily animated, cannot subsist long without Fuel: but where Love is kindled in a generous Heart, by a just Admiration of the real Merits of the Object belov'd, Reason goes Hand in Hand with it, and makes it lasting as our Life. In my Mind, (answer'd *Mel-liora*, coldly) an Esteem so grounded may more properly

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properly be ascribed to Friendship. Then be it so, Madam, (rejoin'd the Count briskly) Friendship and Love, where either are sincere, vary but little in their Meaning; there may indeed be some Distinctions in their Ceremonies, but their Essentials are still the same; and if the Gentleman I speak of were so happy as to hope his Friendship would be acceptable, I dare promise that he never would complain his Love were not so. You have a strange Way (said she) to confound Ideas, which in my Opinion are so vastly different, that I should make no Difficulty in granting my Friendship to as many of my Acquaintance as had Merit to deserve it; but if I were to love in that general Manner, 'twould be a Crime would justly render me contemptible to Mankind. Madam, (reply'd the Count) when I spoke of the Congruity of Love and Friendship, I did not mean that sort, which, to me, seems unworthy of the Name of either, but that exalted one, which made *Orestes* and *Pilades*, *Theseus* and *Perithous*, so famous: That which has no Reserve, no separate Interest, or divided Thoughts, that which fills all——gives all the Soul, and esteems even Life a Trifle, to prove itself sincere——What can Love do more than yield every thing to the Object below'd? And Friendship must do so too, or it is not Friendship. Therefore, take heed, fair Angel, (continued he, taking her Hand and kissing it) how you promise Friendship, when you ne'er mean to love; and observing she was silent, your Hand, (said he) your Lip, your Neck, your Breast, your all—all this whole Heaven of Beauty must be no longer in your own Disposal—all is the Prize of Friendship! As much confus'd as *Melliora* was at these Words, which gave her sufficient Reason to fear he would now declare himself more fully than she desir'd; she had Spirit and Resolution enough to withdraw her Hand from his, and with a Look,

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that spoke her Meaning but too plainly for the Repose of the enamour'd *D'Elmont* : I shall take care, my Lord, (said she) how I commence a Friendship with any Person who shall make use of it to my Prejudice.

THE Count was now sensible of his Error in going so far, and fearing he had undone himself in her Esteem by his rash Proceeding, thought it was best at once to throw off a Disguise, which, in spite of his Endeavours, would fall off of itself, and by making a bold and free Confession of his real Sentiments, oblige her to a Discovery of her's. — I do not doubt your Caution, Madam, (answered he) in this Point : Your reserved Behaviour, even to me, convinces me, but too fully, how little you are disposed to give, or receive any Proofs of Friendship : But perhaps (continu'd he, with a deep Sigh) my too presuming Eyes have render'd me a suspected Person, and while you find in me the Wretch I have describ'd, you find nothing in me worthy of a happier Fortune. You are worthy every thing my Lord, (said *Melliora*, quite beside herself at these Words) nor are you less happy than you deserve to be, and I would rather that these Eyes should lose their Sight, than view you otherwise than now I see you, bless'd in every Circumstance, the Darling of the World, the Idol of the Court, and Favourite of Heaven ! Oh ! stop, (cry'd *D'Elmont*, hastily interrupting her) forbear to curse me farther, rather command my Death, than wish the Continuance of my present Miseries. Cruel *Melliora*, too well, alas ! you know what I have endur'd from the first fatal Moment I beheld you, and only feign an Ignorance to distract me more. A thousand times you have read my rising Wishes, sparkling in my Eyes, and glowing on my Cheeks ; as often seen my Virtue struggling in silent Tremblings and Life-wasting Anguish to suppress Desire,

fire. Nay, Madam, (said he, catching fast hold of both her Hands, seeing her about to rise) by all my sleepless Nights, and restless Days, by all the countless burning Agonies, by all the Torments of my gall'd, bleeding Heart, I swear, that you shall hear me: I have heard too much (cry'd *Melliora*, not able to contain herself) and tho' I am unwilling to believe you have any farther Aim in this Discourse than your Diversion; yet I must tell your Lordship, that there are Themes more proper for it than the Daughter of your Friend, who was intrusted to your Care, with a far different Opinion of your Behaviour to her. What have I done (resumed the almost distracted Count, falling at her Feet, and grasping her Knees!) what have I done, inhuman *Melliora*! to deserve this Rigour? My Honour has hitherto prevail'd above Desire, fierce and raging as it is, nor had I any other Hopes by making this Declaration, than to meet that Pity my Misfortunes merit, and you cannot, without Ingratitude, deny: Pity even to Criminals is allow'd, and sure, where the Offence is involuntary, like mine, 'tis due. 'Tis impossible to guess the Conflict in *Melliora*'s Breast at this Instant; she had heard a most passionate Declaration of Love from a marry'd Man, and by Consequence, whatever his Pretences were, could look on his Designs no otherwise than aim'd at the Destruction of her Honour, and was fir'd with a virtuous Indignation: But then she saw in this married Man, the only Person in the World, who was capable of inspiring her with a tender Thought; she saw him reduc'd to the last Extremity of Despair for her Sake; she heard his Sighs, she felt his Tremblings as he held her, and could not refrain shedding some Tears both for him and for herself, who indeed suffer'd little less; but the Count was not so happy as to be Witness of this Testimony of her Compassion: He had inclin'd his

his Head on her Lap, possibly to hide those that forc'd their Way through his Eyes, at the same time ; and *Alovisa's* Voice, which they heard below, giving them both an Alarm, they had no further Opportunity for Speech, and the Count was but just gone out of the Room, and *Melliora* laid on the Couch in the same careless Posture which he had found her in, when *Alovisa* enter'd the Chamber ; and after having a little pleasantly reproach'd her, for being so lazy as not to accompany her in the Walk she had been taking, ask'd her if she had not seen the Count, who she had been told was come home : Poor *Melliora* had much ado to conceal the Disorder she was in at this Question ; but recovering herself as well as she could, answer'd in the Affirmative ; but that he had not staid there longer than to enquire where she was gone, and that she knew not but he might be gone in search of her. This was enough to make *Alovisa* take her Leave, impatient for the Sight of her dear Lord, a Happiness she had not enjoy'd since Morning ; but she was disappointed of her Hope. The Count, as late as it was in the Evening, went into the Chaise, which had not been set up since he came from the Baron *D'Espernay's*, and drove thither again with all the Speed he could.

THE Baron was extremely surpriz'd at his sudden Return, and with so much Confusion and Melancholy in his Countenance ; but much more so, when he had given him an Account of what had pass'd between him and *Melliora*, and could not forbear rallying him excessively on the Occasion. What, said he, a Man of Wit and Pleasure, like Count *D'Elmont*, a Man who knows the Sex so well, could he let slip so favourable an Opportunity with the finest Woman in the World ! One, for whose Enjoyment he would die !---Could a Frown, or a little angry Coyness, (which ten to one

one was but affected) have Power to freeze such fierce Desires ! The Count was not at present in a Humour to relish this Merriment, he was too seriously in Love to bear that any thing relating to it should be turn'd into Ridicule, and was far from repenting he had done no more, since what he had done had occasion'd her Displeasure : But the Baron, who had Designs in his Head, which he knew could not by any Means be brought to succeed, but by keeping the Count's Passion warm, made use of all the Artifice he was Master of, to embolden this respective Lover to the Gratification of his Wishes : And growing more grave than he had been, My Lord, said he, you do not only injure the Dignity of our Sex in general, but your own Merits in particular, and perhaps even *Meliora's* secret Inclinations, by this unavailing distant Carriage, and careless Despair. — Have you not confess'd that she has look'd on you with a Tenderness, like that of Love ; that she has blush'd at your Sight, and trembled at your Touch? — What would you more that she should do, or what indeed can she do more, in Modesty, to prove her Heart is yours ? A little Resolution on your side would make her all yours. — Women are taught by Custom to deny what they most covet, and to seem angry when they are best pleas'd ; believe me, *D'Elmont*, that the most rigid Virtue of them all, never yet hated a Man for those Faults, which Love occasions. All this, answer'd the Count, is what I really agree to. — But oh ! her Father's Memory ! My Obligation to him ! Her Youth and Innocence, are Daggers to my cool Reflections. — Wou'd it not be Pity, *D'Espernay* (continu'd he, with a deep Sigh) even if she should consent, to ruin so much Sweetness ? The Baron could not forbear laughing at these Words ; and the Count, who had started these Objections, only with the Hope of having them remov'd, easily suffer'd

suffer'd himself to be persuaded to follow his Inclination ; and it was soon concluded betwixt them, that, on the first Opportunity, *Melliora* should fall a Sacrifice to Love.

THE Count came not Home till the next Morning, and brought the Baron with him, for they were now become inseparable Friends : At his Return, he found *Alovisa* in a very ill Humour for his being abroad all Night ; and, in spite of the Resolutions she had made of shewing a perfect Resignation to her Husband's Will, could not forbear giving him some Hints, how unkindly she took it, which he but little regarded ; all his Thoughts were now bent on the gaining *Melliora*. But that Lady, alarm'd at his late Behaviour, and, with Reason, doubting her own Power of resenting it as she ought, or indeed resisting any future Attempts he might make, feign'd the Necessity of performing some private Rules of Devotion enjoin'd her as a Penance, and kept her Chamber that she might not see him.

THE Disquietudes of *D'Elmont* for being forc'd to live but for three or four Days without the Happiness of beholding her, convinc'd him, how impossible it was for him to overcome his Passion, tho' he should never so vigorously endeavour it, and that whatever Method he should make use of to satisfy it, might be excus'd by the Necessity.

WHAT is it that a Lover cannot accomplish when Resolution is on his Side ? *D'Elmont*, after having formed a thousand fruitless Inventions, at last pitch'd on one which promis'd him an Assurance of Success. In *Melliora*'s Chamber there was a little Door that open'd to a Pair of Back-Stairs, for the Convenience of the Servants coming to clean the Room, and at the Bottom of that Descent, a Gate into the Garden. The Count set his Wits to work, to get the Keys of those two Doors ;

Doors ; that of the Garden stood always in it, nor could he keep it without its being miss'd at Night, when they should come to fasten the Gate ; therefore he carefully took the Impression in Wax, and had one made exactly like it : The other he could by no means compass without making some Excuse to go to *Melliora's* Chamber, and she had desir'd that none might visit her ; but he overcame this Bar to his Design at last ; there was a Cabinet in it, where he told *Alovisa* he had put some Papers of great Concern, which now he wanted to look over, and desir'd she would make an Apology for his coming in to fetch them. *Melliora* imagined this was only a Pretence to see her ; but his Wife being with him, and he saying nothing to her, or taking any further notice than what common Civility requir'd, was not much troubled at it. While *Alovisa* was paying a Compliment to the Recluse, he was dexterous enough to slip the Key out of the Door, unperceiv'd by either of them.

As soon as he had got the Passport to his expected Joys in his Possession, he order'd a Couple of Saddle-Horses to be made ready, and, only attended by one Servant, rid out, as if to take the Air ; but when they were got about two or three Miles from the House, commanded him to return and tell his Lady, that he should lie that Night at the Baron *D'Espernay's* ; the Fellow obey'd, and clapping Spurs to his Horse, was immediately lost in a Cloud of Dust.

D'Elmont had sent this Message to prevent any of the Family sitting up expecting him, and instead of going to the Baron's, turn'd short, and went to *Angerville*, where meeting with some Gentlemen of his Acquaintance, he pass'd the Hours till between twelve and one, as pleasantly as his Impatience to be with *Melliora* would give him Leave. He had not much above a Furlong to ride,
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and his Desires made him not spare his Horse, which he ty'd by the Bridle, hot and foaming as he was, to a huge Oak, which grew pretty near his Garden; it was encompassed only with a Hedge, and that so low, that he got over it without any Difficulty; he look'd carefully about him, and found no Tell-tale Lights in any of the Rooms, and concluding all was hush'd as he could wish, open'd the first Door; but the increasing Transports of his Soul, as he came up Stairs, to be so near the End of all his Wishes, are more easily imagin'd than express'd; but as violent as they were, they presently received a vast Addition, when he came into the happy Chamber, and, by a most delightful Gloom, a Friend to Lovers (for it was neither dark nor light) he beheld the lovely *Melliora* in her Bed, and fast asleep; her Head was reclined on one of her Arms; a Pillow softer and whiter far than that it lean'd on; the other was stretch'd out, and with its Extension had thrust down the Bed-Cloaths so far that all the Beauties of her Neck and Breast appear'd to View. He took an inexpressible Pleasure in gazing on her as she lay, and in this silent Contemplation of her thousand Charms, his Mind was agitated with various Emotions; and the resistless Posture he beheld her in, rous'd all that was honourable in him; he thought it pity even to wake her, but more to wrong such Innocence; and he was sometimes prompted to return and leave her as he found her.

BUT whatever Dominion Honour and Virtue may have over our waking Thoughts, 'tis certain that they fly from the closed Eyes; our Passions then exert their forceful Power, and that which is most predominant in the Soul, agitates the Fancy, and brings even things impossible to pass: Desire, with watchful Diligence repell'd, returns with greater Violence in unguarded Sleep, and overthrows

throws the vain Efforts of Day. *Melliora*, in spite of herself, was often happy in Idea, and possess'd a Blessing which Shame and Guilt deterr'd her from in Reality. Imagination at this time was active, and brought the charming Count much nearer than indeed he was; and he stooping to the Bed, and gently laying his Face close to hers, (possibly designing no more than to steal a Kiss from her unperceiv'd) that Action concurring at that Instant with her Dream, made her throw her Arm (still slumbering) about his Neck, and in a soft and languishing Voice, cry out, O! *D'Elmont*, cease, cease to charm to such a Height! — Life cannot bear these Raptures! — And then, again embracing him yet closer, — O! too, too lovely Count — Extatick Ruiner!

WHERE was now the Resolution he was forming some Moments before? If he had now left her, some might have applauded an Honour so uncommon, but more would have condemn'd his Stupidity; for I believe there are very few Men, how Stoical soever they pretend to be, that in such a tempting Circumstance would not have lost all Thoughts, but those, which the present Opportunity inspir'd. That he did, is most certain; for he tore open his Waistcoat, and join'd his panting Breast to hers, with such a tumultuous Eagerness! seiz'd her with such a Rapidity of transported Hope-crown'd Passion, as immediately wak'd her from an imaginary Felicity, to the Approaches of a solid one. Where have I been (said she, just opening her Eyes) where am I? — (And then coming more perfectly to herself) Heaven! What's this? — I am *D'Elmont*! (cry'd the overjoy'd Count) the happy *D'Elmont*! *Melliora*'s, the charming *Melliora*'s *D'Elmont*! Oh, all ye Saints! (resum'd the surpriz'd, trembling Fair) ye ministering Angels! whose Business is to guard the Innocent! protect and shield my Virtue! O

say

say, how came you here, my Lord? Love, said he, Love that does all, that Wonder-working Power has sent me here, to charm thee, sweet Resister, into yielding. O! hold, (cry'd she, finding he was proceeding to Liberties, which her Modesty could not allow of) forbear, I do conjure you, even by that Love you plead, before my Honour, I'll resign my Life! Therefore, unless you wish to see me dead, a Victim to your cruel, fatal Passion, I beg you to desist, and leave me: — I cannot — must not (answer'd he, growing still more bold) what! when I have you thus! Thus naked in my Arms, trembling, defenceless, yielding, panting with equal Wishes, thy Love confess'd, and every Thought Desire! What could'st thou think if I should leave thee? How justly wouldst thou scorn my easy Tameness; my Dulness, unworthy the Name of Lover, or even of Man! — Come, come, no more Reluctance (continued he, gathering Kisses from her soft snowy Breast at every Word) Damp not the Fires thou hast rais'd with seeming Coyness! I know thou art mine! All mine; And thus I—Yet think (said she, interrupting him, and struggling in his Arms) think what 'tis you would do; nor for a Moment's Joy, hazard your Peace for ever. By Heaven, cry'd he, I will this Night be Master of my Wishes, no matter what To-morrow may bring forth: as soon as he had spoke these Words, he put it out of her Power either to deny or reproach him, by stopping her Mouth with Kisses, and was just on the Point of making good what he had vow'd, when a loud knocking at the Chamber-Door, put a stop to his beginning Extasy, and chang'd the sweet Confusion *Meliora* had been in, to all the Horrors of a Shame and Guilt-distracted Apprehension: They made no Doubt but that it was *Alovisa*, and that they were betray'd; the Count's greatest Concern was for
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Melliora, and the Knocking still continuing louder, all he could do in this Exigence, was to make his Escape the Way he came: There was no time for taking Leave, and he could only say, perceiving she was ready to faint with her Fears—Be comforted, my Angel, and resolute in your Denials, to whatever Questions the natural Insolence of a jealous Wife may provoke mine to ask you; and we shall meet again (if *D'Elmont* survives this Disappointment, without Danger of so quick, so curst a Separation). *Melliora* was in too much Distraction to make any Answer to what he said, and he had left the Room some Moments before she could get Spirit enough to ask who was at the Door: But when she did, was as much surpriz'd to find it was *Melantha*, who desir'd to be let in, as before she was affrighted at the Belief it was *Alovisa*; however she immediately flipt on her Night-Gown and Slippers, and open'd the Door.

You are a sound Sleeper indeed (cry'd *Melantha*, laughing) that all the Noise I have made could not wake you. I have not been all this while asleep (answer'd *Melliora*); but not knowing you were in the House, could not imagine who it was that gave me this Disturbance. I heartily ask your Pardon (said *Melantha*) and I know, my Dear, you are too good-natur'd to refuse it me, especially when you know the Occasion; which is so very whimsical, that, as grave as you are, you cannot help being diverted with it—But come (continu'd she) get on your Cloaths, for you must go along with me. Where? said *Melliora*. Nay, nay, ask no Questions (resum'd *Melantha*) but make haste, every Minute that we idle away here, loses us the Diversion of an Age. As she spake these Words, she fell into such an excessive Laughter, that *Melliora* thought her mad; but being far from sympathizing

pathizing in her Gaiety; It has always (said she) been hitherto my Custom to have some Reason for what I do, tho' in never so trifling an Affair; and you must excuse me, if I do not break it now. Pish (cry'd *Melantha*) you are of the oddest Temper,——but I will give you your Way for once——provided you'll get yourself ready in the mean time. I shall certainly put on my Cloaths (said *Melliora*) lest I should take cold, for I expect you'll not permit me to sleep any more this Night. You may be sure of it (rejoin'd *Melantha*.) But to the Purpose,——You must know, having an Hour or two on my Hands, I came this Evening to visit *Alovisa*, and found her in the strangest Humour!——Good God! what unaccountable Creatures these married Women are!——her Husband, it seems, had sent her Word that he would lie at my Brother's, and the poor loving Soul could not bear to be a Night without him I staid to condole with her, (tho' on my Life I could not forbear laughing in her Face) till it was too late to go home.——About twelve a Clock she yawn'd, stretch'd, and grew most horridly out of Temper; rail'd at Mankind prodigiously, and curs'd Matrimony as heartily as one of fourscore could do, that had been twice a Widow, and was left a Maid!——With much ado, she made her Woman thrust her into Bed, and retir'd to a Chamber which they shew'd me; but I had no inclination to sleep: I remember'd myself of five or six *Billet-Doux* I had to answer,——a Lover, that growing foolishly troublesome, I have some Thoughts of discharging to-morrow—Another that design to countenance, to pique a third—a new suit of Cloaths and Trimmings for the next Ball——Half a hundred new Songs——and—a thousand other Affairs of the utmost Consequence to my young Lady, came into my Head in a Moment; and the Night being extremely pleasant, I set the

Candle in the Chimney, open'd the Window, and fell to considering——But I had not been able to come to a Conclusion what I should do in any one thing I was thinking of, before I was interrupted in my Cogitations, with a Noise of something rushing hastily thro' the Myrtles under my Window, and presently after, saw it was a Man going hastily toward the great Alley of the Garden.—At first I was going to cry out and alarm the Family, taking it for a Thief: But, dear *Melliora*, how glad am I that I did not?—For who do you think, when I look'd more heedfully, I perceiv'd it was? Nay, how should I know? (cry'd *Melliora* peevishly, fearing the Count's Inadvertency had expos'd himself and her to this foolish Woman's Curiosity) It was Count *D'Elmont* (resum'd *Melantha*) I'll lay my Life, that he has been on some Intrigue to Night, and met with a Disappointment, by his quick Return—But prithee make haste, for I long to rally him about it. What would you do Madam? (said *Melliora*) you would not sure go to him? Yes, (answer'd *Melantha*) I will go down into the Garden, and so shall you—I know you have a Back-way from your Chamber—Therefore lay aside this unbecoming Demureness, and let us go, and talk him to Death. You may do as you please, (said *Melliora*) but for my Part, I am for no such Frolicks. Was ever any Thing so young, so formal as you are! (rejoin'd *Melantha*) but I am resolv'd to tease you out of a Humour so directly opposite to the *Beau-Monde*; and, if you will not consent to go down with me, I will fetch him up to your Chamber——Hold, hold, (cry'd *Melliora*, perceiving she was going) what do you mean? for Heavens sake stay; what will *Alovisa* think?—I care not, reply'd the other, I have set my Heart on an Hour's Diversion with him, and will not be

baulk'd

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baulk'd, if the Repose of the World, much less that of a jealous, silly Wife, depended on it.

MELLIORA saw into the Temper of this capricious young Lady too well, not to believe she would do as she had said, and perhaps, was not overwilling to venture her with the Count alone, at that time of Night, and in the Humour she knew he was; therefore putting on an Air more chearful than that she was accusom'd to wear, Well (said she) I will accompany you into the Garden, since it will so much oblige you; but, if the Count be wise, he will, by quitting the Place as soon as he sees us, disappoint you worse than I should have done, if I had kept you here. With these Words she took her by the Hand, and they went down the Stairs, were the Count was but just pass'd before them.

HE had not Power to go away, without knowing who it was, that had given him that Interruption, and had stood all this Time, on the upper Step behind the inner Door. His Vexation, and Disdain, when he heard it was *Melantha*, gave him as much Pain, as his Concern while he believ'd it *Alovisa*; and he could not forbear muttering a thousand Curfes on her Impertinence. He always despis'd, but now abhorr'd her: She had behav'd herself to him in a Fashion, as made him sufficiently sensible she was desirous of engaging him, and he resolv'd to mortify, by the bitterest Slights, both her Pride and Love, if 'tis proper to call that sort of Liking which agitates the Soul of a *Coquet*, by that Name.

THE Ladies walk'd in the Garden for some time, and *Melantha* search'd every Bush before she found the Count, who stood conceal'd in the Porch, which being covered with *Jessamin*, and *Phylerea* was dark enough to hide him from their View, tho' they had pass'd close to him as they came out. He had certainly remain'd there till Morning, and

disappointed *Melantha's* Search, in part of the Revenge he ow'd her, if his Desires to be with *Melliora* on any Terms, had not prevail'd, even above his Anger to the other. But he could not see that Charmer of his Soul, and imagine there might be yet an Opportunity that Night, of stealing a Kiss from her (now, he believ'd) resistsless Lips, of touching her Hand! her Breast! And repeating some farther Freedoms, which his late Advantage over her had given him, without being fill'd with Wishes too fiery and too impatient to be restrain'd. He watch'd their turning, and when he saw that they were near an Alley, which had another that led to it, he went round and met them.

MELANTHA was overjoy'd at the Sight of him, and *Melliora*, tho' equally pleas'd, was cover'd with such a Confusion, at the Remembrance of what had pass'd, that it was happy for her that her Companion's Volubility gave her no room for Speech. There is nothing more certain, than that Love, tho' it fills the Mind with a thousand charming Ideas, which those untouch'd by that Passion are not capable of conceiving; yet it entirely takes away the Power of Utterance, and the deeper Impression it has made on the Soul, the less we are able to express it: when willing to indulge and give a Loose to Thought; what Language can furnish us with Words sufficient? All are too poor, all wanting both in Sublimity, and Softness; and only Fancy! a Lover's Fancy! can reach the exalted Soaring of a Lover's Meaning! But if so impossible to be describ'd, if of so vast, so wonderful a Nature, as nothing but itself can comprehend; how much more impossible must it be, intirely to conceal it? What strength of boasted Reasons? What Force of Resolution? What modest Fears, or cunning Artifice, can correct the Fierceness of its fiery Flashes in the Eyes, keep down

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down the struggling Sighs, command the Pulse, and bid Trembling cease? Honour and Virtue may distance Bodies, but there is no Power in either of those Names, to stop the Spring, that, with a rapid Whirl, transports us from ourselves, and darts our Souls into the Bosom of the darling Object. This may seem strange to many, even of those who call, and perhaps believe that they are Lovers; but the few who have Delicacy enough to feel what I but imperfectly attempt to speak, will acknowledge it for Truth, and pity the Distress of *Melliora*.

As they were passing thro' a Walk of Trees on each Side, whose intermingling Boughs made a friendly Darkness, and every thing undistinguishable, the amorous *D'Elmont* throwing his eager Arms round the Waist of (his no less transported) *Melliora*, and printing burning Kisses on her Neck, reap'd painful Pleasure, and created in her a racking kind of Extacy, which might perhaps, had they been now alone, prov'd her Desires very little different from his.

AFTER *Melantha* had vented part of the Rallery she was so big with, on the Count, which he but little regarded, being wholly taken up with other Thoughts, she propos'd going into the Wilderness, which was at the farther End of the Garden: And they readily agreeing to it; Come, my Lord, (said she) to the Count, you are melancholy, I have thought of a Way which will either indulge the Humour you are in, or divert it, as you shall chuse: There are several little Paths in the Wilderness, let us take each a separate one; and when we meet, which shall be here, where we part, agree to tell an entertaining Story, which whoever fails in, shall be doom'd to the Punishment of being left here all Night: The Count at these Words, forgot all his Animosity, and was ready to hug her for this Proposal. *Melliora*

did a little oppose it, but the others were too powerful, and she was forc'd to submit. Thou art the dullest Creature! I'll lay my Life, my Lord (cry'd *Melantha*, taking hold of the Count in a gay manner) that it falls to her Lot to stay in the Wilderness. Oh, Madam (reply'd the Count) you are too severe, we ought always to suspend our Judgment till after Trial, which I confess myself so pleas'd with, that I am impatient for its coming on. Well, then (said she, laughing) farewell for an Hour. Agreed (cry'd the Count) and walk'd away: *Melantha* saw which way he went, and took another Path, leaving *Melliora* to go forward in that in which they were; but I believe the Reader will imagine that she was not long to enjoy the Privilege of her Meditations.

AFTER the Count had gone some few Paces, he planted himself behind a Thicket, which, while it hid him, gave the Opportunity of observing them; and when he found the Coast clear, rush'd out, and with unhurting Gripe seiz'd once more on the unguarded Prey. Blest Turn of Fortune (said he in a Rapture) Happy, happy Moment! — Lost, lost *Melliora* (said she) unhappy Maid! — Oh why, my Lord, this quick Return! This is no Place to answer thee (resum'd he, taking her in his Arms, and bearing her behind that Thicket, where he himself had stood). 'Twas in vain for her to resist, if she had had the Power over her Inclinations; till he, setting her softly down, and beginning to caress her in the manner he had done when she was in Bed, she assum'd Strength enough to raise herself a little, and catching hold of his transgressing Hands, laid her Face on them, and bath'd them in a Shower of Tears: Oh! *D'Elmont* (said she) cruel *D'Elmont*! Will you then take Advantage of my Weakness? I confess I feel for you a Passion, far beyond all that yet ever bore the Name of Love; and that I can no longer with-

stand

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stand the too-powerful Magick of your Eyes, nor deny any Thing that charming Tongue can ask ; but now's the Time to prove yourself a Hero ! subdue yourself, as you have conquer'd me ! be satisfied with vanquishing my Soul ; fix there your Throne, but leave my Honour free ! Life of my Life (cry'd he) wound me no more by such untimely Sorrows : I cannot bear thy Tears, by Heaven they sink into my Soul, and quite unman me : But tell me (continu'd he, tenderly kissing her) could'st thou with all this Love, this charming — something more than Softness—could'st thou, I say, consent to see me pale and dead, stretch'd at thy Feet, consum'd with inward Burnings, rather than blest, than rais'd by Love and thee, to all a Deity in thy Embraces ! For, Oh ! believe me when I swear, that 'tis impossible to live without thee. No more, no more (said she letting her Hand fall gently on his Breast) too easily I guess thy Sufferings by my own ; but yet *D'Elmont* 'tis better to die in Innocence than to live in Guilt, Oh ! why (resum'd he, sighing, as if his Heart would burst) shou'd what we can't avoid be call'd a Crime ? Be Witness for me, Heaven ! how much I have struggled with this rising Passion, even to Madness struggled — but in vain ; the mounting Flame blazes the more, the more I would suppress it — my very Soul's on Fire — I cannot bear it, — Oh, *Melliora* ! didst thou but know the thousandth Part of what this Moment I endure, the strong Convulsions of my warring Thoughts, thy Heart, steel'd as it is, and frosted round with Virtue, would burst its icy Shield, and melt in Tears of Blood to pity me. Unkind and Cruel ! (answer'd she) do I not partake them then ? — Do I not bear, at least, an equal Share in all your Agonies ? Have you no Charms — or have not I a Heart ? — A most susceptible and tender Heart ? — Yes, you may feel it throb, it beats against my

F 4

Breast,

Breast, like an imprison'd Bird, and fain would burst its Cage! to fly to you, the Aim of all its Wishes! — Oh, *D'Elmont*—With these Words she sunk wholly into his Arms, unable to speak more: Nor was he less dissolv'd in Rapture, both their Souls seem'd to take Wing together, and left their Bodies motionless, as unworthy to bear a Part in their more elevated Bliss.

BUT *D'Elmont*, at his returning Sense, repenting the Effects of the violent Transport he had been in, was now preparing to take from the restless *Melliora*, the last, and only remaining Proof that she was all his own, when *Melantha* (who had contriv'd this Separation only with a Design to be alone with the Count, and had carefully observ'd which way he took) was coming towards them. The rustling of her Cloaths among the Bushes, gave the disappointed Lover leave to rise from the Posture he was in, and *Melliora* to abscond behind a Tree, before she could come near enough to discern who was there.

MELANTHA, as soon as she saw the Count, put on an Air of Surprize, as if it were but by chance that she was come into his Walk, and laughing with a visible Affectation, Bless me! you here, my Lord! (said she) I vow this has the Look of Assignation, but I hope you will not be so vain as to believe I came on Purpose to seek you. No, Madam (answered he coldly) I have not the least Thought of being so happy. Lord! you are strangely grave (rejoin'd she) but suppose I really had come with a Design to meet you, what kind of a Reception might I have expected? I know no Reason, Madam (said he) that can oblige me to entertain a Supposition so unlikely. Well then (resum'd she) I'll put it past a Supposition, and tell you plainly, that I did walk this way on purpose to divert your Spleen. I am sorry (reply'd he, tir'd

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to Death with her Impertinence) that you are disappointed ; for I am not in a Humour at present of receiving any Diverſion. Fie (ſaid ſhe) is this an Answer for the gay, gallant, engaging Count *D'Elmont* to give a Lady who makes a Declaration of admiring him—who thinks it not too much to make the firſt Advances, and who would believe herſelf fully recompens'd for breaking through the nice Decorums of her Sex, if he received it kindly——Madam (ſaid he, not a little amaz'd at her Impudence) I know of no ſuch Perſon, or if I did, I muſt confeſs, ſhould be very much puzzled how to behave in an Adventure ſo uncommon. Piſh (answer'd ſhe, growing vex'd at his Coldneſs) I know that ſuch Adventures are not uncommon with you: I'm not to learn the Story of *Aloviſa*, and if you had not been firſt addreſs'd, perhaps might have been 'till now unmarried. Well, Madam (ſaid he, more out of Humour) put the Caſe that what you ſay were true, I am married ; and therefore (interrupted ſhe) you ought to be better acquainted with the Temper of our Sex, and know that a Woman, where ſhe ſays ſhe loves, expects a thouſand fine things in Return. But there is more than a Poſſibility (answer'd ſhe) of her being diſappointed, and methinks, Madam, a Lady of your Gaiety ſhould be converſant enough with Poetry, to remember thoſe two Lines of a famous *Engliſh* Poet.

All naturally fly, what does purſue :

'Tis fit Men ſhould be coy, when Women woo.

MELANTHA was fretted to the Heart to find him ſo inſenſible ; but not being one of thoſe who are apt to repent any thing they have done, ſhe only pretended to fall into a violent Fit of Laughter, and when ſhe came out of it, I confeſs (ſaid ſhe) that I have loſt my Aim, which was to make you believe I was dying for Love of you, raiſe you to

the highest Degree of Expectation, and then have the Pleasure of baulking you at once, by letting you know the Jest. — But your Lordship is too hard for me, even at my own Weapon, Ridicule. I am mightily obliged to you, Madam (answer'd he, more briskly than before) for your Intention however; but 'tis probable, if I could have been drawn into a Belief that you were in earnest, I might, at such a Time, and such a Place as this, have taken some Measures which would have sufficiently reveng'd me on you---But come, Madam (continu'd he) the Morning begins to break, if you please we will find out *Melliora*, and go into the House. As he spoke these Words, they perceiv'd her coming towards them, who had only taken a little Round to meet them, and they all three made what Haste they could in. Count *D'Elmont* asking a formal Leave of *Melliora*, to go through her Chamber, none of the Servants being yet stirring to let him into the House any other Way; which being granted, he could not help sighing as he pass'd by the Bed, where he had been lately so cruelly disappointed, but had no Opportunity to speak his Thought at that Time to *Melliora*.

THE Count rung for his Gentleman to rise to undress him, and order'd him to send somebody to take care of his Horse, and went to Bed. *Alonvisa* was very much surpriz'd at his Return from the Baron's at so unseasonable an Hour, but much more so when, in the Morning, *Melantha* came laughing into the Chamber, and told her all that she knew of the Adventure of the Night before; her old Fit of Jealousy now resum'd its Dominion in her Soul, she could not forbear thinking that there was something more in it than *Melantha* had discover'd; and presently imagin'd that her Husband stay'd not at the Baron's because she was abroad; but she was more confirm'd in this

this Opinion, when *Melantha* calling for her Coach to go Home, the Count told her, that he wou'd accompany her thither, having urgent Business with her Brother. 'Tis almost impossible to guess the Rage *Alovisa* was in; but she dissembled it till they were gone; then going into *Melliora's* Chamber, she vented part of it there, and began to question her about their Behaviour in the Wilderness. Though *Melliora* was glad to find, since she was jealous, that she was jealous of any Body rather than herself, yet she said all that she could to persuade her, that she had no Reason to be uneasy.

BUT *Alovisa* was always of too fiery a Nature, to listen patiently to any thing that could be offer'd, to alter the Opinion she had taken up, though it were with never so little Appearance of Reason; but much more now, when she thought herself in a Manner confirm'd: Forbear, (said she) dear *Melliora*, to take the Part of Perfidy: I know he hates me, I read it in his Eyes, and feel it on his Lips; all Day he shuns my Converse, and at Night, colder than Ice, receives my warm Embraces; and when (Oh! that I could tear the tender Folly from my Heart) with Words as soft as Love can form, I urge him to disclose the Cause of his Disquiet, he answers but in Sighs, and turns away. Perhaps (reply'd *Melliora*) his Temper naturally is gloomy, and Love itself has scarce the Power to alter Nature. Oh! no (interrupted *Alovisa*) far from it: Had I never known him otherwise, I could forgive what now I know; but he was once as kind as tender Mothers to their new-born Babes, and fond as the first Wishes of desiring Youth. Oh! with what Eagerness has he approach'd me, when absent but an Hour! — Had'st thou ever seen him in those Days of Joy, even thou, cold-cloyster'd Maid, must have ador'd him. What Majesty then sat upon his Brow! —

What matchless Glories shone around him! — Myriads of *Cupids* shot resistless Darts in every Glance! — His Voice, when soften'd in amorous Accents, boasted more Musick than the Poet *Orpheus*! Whene'er he spoke, methought the Air seem'd charm'd, the Winds forgot to blow, all Nature listen'd, and, like *Alovisa*, melted into Transport! — But he chang'd in all — the Hero, and the Lover are extinct, and all that's left of the once gay *D'Elmont*, is a dull senseless Picture. *Melliora* was too sensibly touch'd with this Discourse, to be able presently to make any Answer to it, and she could not forbear accompanying her in Tears, while *Alovisa* renew'd her Complaints in this Manner: His Heart (said she) his Heart is lost, for ever ravish'd from me; that Bosom where I had treasur'd all my Joys, my Hopes, my Wishes, now burns and pants with Longings for a Rival. Curst! curst *Melantha*! by Heaven, they are even impudent in Guilt; they toy, they kiss, and make Assignations before my Face, and this Tyrant Husband braves me with his Falshood, and thinks to awe me into Calmness. But if I endure it ——— No (continued she, stamping and walking about the Room in a disorder'd Motion) I'll be no longer the tame easy Wretch I have been — all *France* shall echo with my Wrongs — the ungrateful Monster — Villain, whose well-nigh wasted Stream of Wealth had dry'd, but for my kind Supply; shall he enslave me! — Oh, *Melliora*! shun the Marriage-bed as thou would'st a Serpent's Den; more ruinous, more poisonous far is Man.

'Twas in vain that *Melliora* endeavour'd to pacify her; she continued in this Humour all Day, and in the Evening receiv'd a considerable Addition to her former Disquiet. The Count sent a Servant of the Baron's (having not taken any of his own with him) to acquaint her, that he should

not

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not be at Home that Night. 'Tis well (said she, ready to burst with Rage) let the Count know, that I can change as well as he, and shall excuse his Absence, tho' it lasts to all Eternity: Go (continued she, seeing him surpriz'd) deliver this Message, and withal, assure him, that what I say I mean. She had scarce made an end of these Words, when she flung out of the Room, unable to utter more, and lock'd herself into her Chamber, leaving *Melliora* no less distracted, tho' for different Reasons, to retire to hers.

SHE had not, till now, had a Moment's time for Reflection, since her Adventure in the Wilderness; and the Remembrance of it, join'd with the Despair and Grief of *Alovisa*, which she knew herself the sole Occasion of, threw her into most terrible Agonies. She was ready to die with Shame, when she consider'd how much the Secret of her Soul was laid open to him, who of all the World she ought most to have conceal'd it from, and with Remorse, for the Miseries her fatal Beauty was like to bring on a Family for whom she had the greatest Friendship.

BUT these Thoughts soon gave way to another, equally as shocking; she was present when the Servant brought Word the Count would lie abroad, and had all the Reason imaginable to believe that Message was only a Feint, that he might have an Opportunity to come unobserved to her Chamber, as he had done the Night before. She could not presently guess by what Means he had got in, and therefore was at a Loss how to prevent him, till recollecting all the Circumstances of that tender Interview, she remember'd that when *Melantha* had surpriz'd them, he made his Escape by the Back-stairs into the Garden; and that when they went down, the Door was lock'd; therefore concluded, it must be by a Key that he had gain'd Admittance; and began to set her Invention

110 LOVE in EXCESS: or,

vention to work, how to keep this dangerous Enemy to her Honour from coming in a second Time. She had no Keys that were large enough to fill the Ward, and if she had put one in on the Inside, it would have fallen out immediately on the least Touch; but at last, after trying several Ways, she tore her Handkerchief into small Pieces, and thrust it into the Hole with her Busk, so hard, that it was impossible for any Key to enter.

MELLIORA thought she had done a very heroic Action, and sat herself down on the Bed-side, in a pleas'd Contemplation of the Conquest, she believ'd her Virtue had gain'd over her Passion. But, alas! how little did she know the true State of her own Heart! She no sooner heard a little Noise at the Door, as presently after she did, but she thought it was the Count, and began to tremble, not with Fear, but Desire.

It was indeed Count D'Elmont, who had borrow'd Horses and a Servant of the Baron, and got into the Garden as before, but with a much greater Assurance now of making himself entirely happy in the Gratification of his utmost Wishes. But 'tis impossible to represent the Greatness of his Vexation and Surprise, when all his Efforts to open the Door were in vain; he found something had been done to the Lock, but could not discover what, nor by any Means remove the Obstacle which *Melliora* had put there. She, on the other hand, was in all the Confusion imaginable; sometimes prompted by the Violence of her Passion, she would run to the Door, resolving to open it; and then, frighted with the Apprehension of what would be the Consequence, as hastily fly from it: If he had staid much longer, 'tis possible Love would have got the better of all Considerations; but a Light appearing on the other side of the Garden, oblig'd the thrice disappointed Lover to quit his Post. He had sent away the Horses by the

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the Servant who came with him, and had no Opportunity of going to the Baron's that Night, so came to his own Fore-gate, and thunder'd with a Force suitable to the Fury he was possess'd with ; it was presently open'd, most of the Family being up. *Alovisa* had rav'd herself into Fits, and her Disorder created full Employment for the Servants, who busily running about the House with Candles, fetching Things for her, occasion'd that Reflection which he had seen.

THE Count was told of his Lady's Indisposition ; but he thought he had sufficient Pretence not to come where she was, after the Message she had sent him by the Baron's Servant, and order'd a Bed to be made ready for him in another Chamber.

ALOVISA soon heard he was come in, and it was with much ado that her Woman prevail'd on her not to rise and go to him that Moment, so little did she remember what she had said. She pass'd the Night in most terrible Inquietudes, and early in the Morning went to his Chamber, but finding it shut, she was oblig'd to wait, though with a World of Impatience, till she heard he was stirring ; which not being till towards Noon, she spent all that time in considering how she should accost him.

As soon as the Servant, whom she had order'd to watch, brought her Word that his Lord was dressing, she went into his Room ; there was nobody with him but his Gentleman, and he withdrawing out of Respect, imagining, by both their Countenances, there might something be said not proper for him to hear ; I see (said she) my Presence is unwish'd, but I have learn'd from you to scorn Constraint, and as you openly avow your Falshood, I shall my Indignation, and my just Disdain ! Madam (answer'd he, suddenly) if you have any thing to reproach me with, you could not have chose a more unlucky Time for it, than this,

this, nor was I ever less disposed to give you Satisfaction. No, barbarous cold Insulter! (resum'd she) I had not the least Hope you would; I find that I am grown so low in your Esteem, I am not worth Pains of an Invention.—By Heaven, this damn'd Indifference is worse than the most vile Abuse! — 'Tis plain Contempt! — O that I could resent it as I ought — then Sword, or Poison should revenge me --- Why am I so curs'd to love you still? ---- O that those Fiends (continu'd she, bursting into Tears) that have deform'd thy Soul, would change thy Person too, turn every Charm to horrid Blackness, grim as thy Cruelty, and foul as thy Ingratitude, to free that Heart, thy Perjury has ruin'd! I thought, Madam (said he, with an Accent maliciously ironical) that you had thrown off, even the Appearance of Love for me, by the Message you sent me Yesterday --- O thou Tormentor! (interrupted she) hast thou not wrong'd me in the tenderest Point, driven me to the last Degree of Misery! to Madness! to Despair? And dost thou----can'st thou reproach me for complaining? Your Coldness, your Unkindness stung me to the Soul, and then I said I know not what--- but I remember well, that I would have seem'd careless and indifferent like you. You need not (reply'd he) give yourself the Trouble of an Apology, I have no Design to make a Quarrel of it; and wish, for both our Peace, you could as easily moderate your Passions, as I can mine; and that you may the better do so, I leave you to reflect on what I have said, and the little Reason I have ever given you for such Intemperance. He left the Chamber with these Words, which, instead of quelling, more inflam'd *Alonisa's* Rage. She threw herself down into an Elbow-Chair that stood there, and gave a Loose to the Tempest of her Soul; sometimes she curs'd, and vow'd the bitterest Revenge; sometimes she wept, and at others

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others was resolv'd to fly to Death, the only Remedy for neglected Love. In the midst of these confus'd Meditations, casting her Eye on a Table by her, she saw a Paper, and something written on it, which hastily taking up, found it the Count's Character, and read (to her inexpressible Torment) these Lines.



The Despairing D'ELMONT to his Repenting Charmer.

*WHAT cruel Star last Night had Influence
over my inhuman Dear? Say, to what Cause
must I ascribe my fatal Disappointment? for
I would fain believe I owe it not to thee!—Such
an Action, after what thou hast confess'd, I could
expect from nothing but a Creature of Melantha's
Temper——No, 'tis too much of the vain Coquet,
and indeed too much of the Filt, for my Adorable to
be guilty of—and yet—Oh! how shall I excuse
thee! when every thing was hush'd, Darkness my
Friend, and all my Wishes rais'd, when every Nerve
trembled with fierce Desires, and my Pulse beat a
Call to Love, or Death,——(For if I not enjoy
thee, that will soon arrive) then, then what, but
thyself, forgetting all thy Vows, thy tender Vows
of the most ardent Passion, could have destroy'd my
Hopes!—Oh! where was then that Love, which
lately flatter'd my fond doating Soul, when sinking
down in my Arms, my Charmer lay! And suffer'd
me to reap each Prologue Favour to the greatest
Bliss?——But they are past, and rigid Honour
stands to guard those Joys, which——*

THERE

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THERE was no more written, but there need-
ed no more to make *Alovisa*, before half di-
stracted, now quite so. She was now convinc'd
that she had a much more dangerous Rival than
Melantha; and her Curiosity who it might be,
was not much less troublesome to her than other
Passions.

SHE was going to seek her Husband with this
Testimony of his Infidelity in her Hand, when he,
remembering he had left it there, was coming
hastily back to fetch it. The Excess of Fury which
she met him with, is hardly to be imagined; she
upbraided him in such a Fashion as might be cal-
led reviling, and had so little Regard to good
Manners, or even Decency in what she said, that
it dissipated all the Confusion he was in at first, to
see so plain a Proof against him in her Hands, and
rouz'd him to a Rage not much inferior to her's.
She endeavour'd (tho' she took a wrong Method)
to bring him to a Confession he had done amiss,
and he to lay the Tempest of her Tongue, by
storming louder, but neither succeeded in their
Wish. And he, stung with the Bitterness of her
Reproaches, and tired with Clamour, at last flung
from her with a solemn Vow never to eat, or sleep
with her more.

A WIFE, if equally haughty and jealous, if less
fond than *Alovisa*, will scarce be able to com-
prehend the Greatness of her Sufferings: And it is
not to be wonder'd at, that she, so violent in all
her Passions, and agitated by so many at once,
committed a thousand Extravagancies, which those
who knew the Force but of one, by the Aid of
Reason, may avoid. She tore down the Count's
Picture which hung in the Room, and stamp'd on
it, then the Letter, her own Cloaths and Hair,
and whoever had seen her in that Posture, would
have thought she appear'd more like what the Fa-
ries are represented to be, than a Woman.

THE

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THE Count when he took leave the Night before of the Baron *D'Espernay*, had promis'd to return to him in the Morning, and give him an account of his Adventure with *Melliora*; but the Vexation of his Disappointment, and Quarrel with his Wife, having hinder'd him all this time. The Baron came to his House, impatient to know the Success of an Affair on which his own Hopes depended. He was told by the Servants that their Lord was above; and running hastily without Ceremony, the first Person he saw was *Alovisa*, in the Condition I have described.

THE Baron had passionately lov'd this Lady from the first Moment he had seen her; but it was with that sort of Love, which considers more its Gratification, than the Interest, or Quiet of the Object beloved. He imagin'd by the Wildness of *Alovisa's* Countenance and Behaviour, that the Count had given her some extraordinary Occasion of Distaste; and was so far from being troubled at the Sorrow he beheld her in, that he rejoic'd at it, as the Advancement of his Designs. But he wanted not Cunning to disguise his Sentiments, and approaching her with a tender and submissive Air, entreated her to tell him the Cause of her Disorder. *Alovisa* had always considered him as a Person of Worth, and one who was entitled to her Esteem by the vast Respect he always paid her, and the Admiration, which in every Opportunity, he express'd for her Wit and Beauty. She was not perhaps far from guessing the Extent of his Desires, by some Looks, and private Glances he had given her, and, notwithstanding her Passion for the Count, was too vain to be offended at it. On the contrary, it pleas'd her Pride, and confirm'd her in the good Opinion she had of herself, to think a Man of his Sense should be compell'd by the Force of her irresistible Attractions, to adore and to despair, and there-

116 LOVE in EXCESS: or,

therefore made no Difficulty of disburthening all the Anguish of her Soul, in the Bosom of this, as she believ'd, so faithful Friend.

THE Baron seem'd to receive this Declaration of her Wrongs, with all imaginable Concern, and accus'd the Count of Stupidity in so little knowing the Value of a Jewel he was Master of, and gave her some Hints, that he was not unsensible who the Lady was, that had been the Cause of it, which *Alovisa* presently taking hold on; O, speak her Name (said she) quick, let me know her, or own thy Friendship was but feign'd to undo me, and that thou hatest the wretched *Alovisa*. O, far (resum'd he) far be such Thoughts; first let me die to prove my Zeal—my Faith, sincere to you, who only next to Heaven, are worthy Adoration—but forgive me, if I say, in this, you must not be obey'd. O why, said she? Perhaps (answered he) I am a trusted Person ——— a Confident — and if I should reveal the Secret of my Friend, I know, tho' you approv'd the Treachery, you would detest the Traytor. Oh! never, (rejoin'd she impatiently) 'twould be a Service, more than the whole Study of my Life can pay ——— Am I not rack'd,—stab'd—and mangled in Idea, by some dark Hand shaded with Night and Ignorance? And should I not be grateful for a friendly Clue to guide me from this Labyrinth of Doubt, to a full Day of Certainty, where all the Fiend may stand expos'd before me, and I have Scope to execute my Vengeance? Besides, (continued she, finding he was silent and seemingly extremely mov'd at what she said) 'tis joining in the Cause of Guilt to hide her from me ——— Come, you must tell me ——— your Honour suffers else ——— both that, and Pity, plead the Injured's Cause. Alas! (said he) Honour can ne'er consent to a Discovery of what, with solemn Vows, I have promis'd to conceal. But Oh! — there is something in my Soul more powerful

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powerful, which says, that *Alovisa* must not be deny'd. Why then (cry'd she) do you delay? Why keep you me on the Rack, when one short Word would ease me of my Torment? I have consider'd answer'd he, after a Pause) Madam, you shall be satisfied, depend on it you shall, tho' not this Moment; you shall have greater Proofs than Words can give you—Ocular Demonstration shall strike Denial dumb. What mean you? (interrupted she.) You shall behold (said he) the guilty Pair, link'd in each other's Arms. Oh, *Espernay*! (rejoin'd she) couldst thou do that? — 'Tis easy (answer'd he) as I can order Matters—but longer Conference may render me suspected—I'll go seek the Count, for he must be my Engine to betray himself — in a Day or two, at farthest, you shall enjoy all the revenge Detection can bestow.

ALOVISA would fain have persuaded him to have told him the Name of her Rival, in part of that full Conviction he had promis'd her; but in vain, and she was oblig'd to leave the Issue of this Affair entirely to his Management.

THE Baron was extremely pleas'd with the progress he had made, and did not doubt but, for the Purchase of this Secret, he should obtain every thing he desir'd of *Alovisa*. He found Count *D'Elmont* full of troubled and perplex'd Thoughts; and when he had heard the History of his Disappointment; I am sorry to hear (said he) that the foolish Girl does not know her own Mind—but come, my Lord (continu'd he, after a little pause) do not suffer yourself to sink beneath a Caprice, which all those who converse much with that Sex must frequently meet with—I have a Con-
 vivance in my Head, that cannot fail to render all her peevish Virtue frustrate, and make her happy in her own Despite. Oh, *Espernay*! (reply'd the Count) thou talkest as Friendship prompts thee; I know thou wishest my Success; but, alas!

so

so many, and such unforeseen Accidents have hap-
pen'd hitherto to prevent me, that I begin to think
the Hand of Fate has set me down for lost. For
shame, my Lord, (interrupted the Baron) be not
so poor in Spirit——once more I tell you that she
shall be yours——a Day or two shall make her so
——and because I know you Lovers are unbeliev-
ing, and impatient——I will communicate the
Means. A Ball, and Entertainment, shall be pro-
vided at my House, to which all the neighbour-
ing People shall be invited; amongst the Number,
yourself, your Lady, and *Melliora*: It will be
late before 'tis done, and I must persuade your
Family, and some others, who live farthest off,
(to countenance the Design) to stay all Night; all
that you have to do is to keep up your Resent-
ment to *Alovisa*, that you may have a Pretence
to sleep from her: I shall take care to have *Mel-
liora* plac'd where no Impediment may bar your
Entrance. Impossible Suggestion! (cry'd *D'El-
mont*, shaking his Head) *Alovisa* is in too much
Rage of Temper to listen to such an Invitation,
and without her, we must not hope for *Melliora*.
How industrious are you (resum'd the Baron) to
create Difficulties where there are none! Though
I confess, this may have, to you, a reasonable
Appearance of one: But know, my Friendship
builds its Hopes to serve you on a sure Founda-
tion——This jealous, furious Wife, makes me
the Confident of her imagin'd Injuries, conjures
me to use all my Interest with you for a Recon-
cilement, and believes I am now pleading for her.
——I must for a while rail at your Ingratitude,
and condemn your want of Taste, to keep my
Credit with her, and now and then sweeten her
with a doubtful Hope, that it may be possible at last
to bring you to acknowledge, that you have been
in an Error; this at once confirms her, that I

am wholly on her Side, and engages her to follow my Advice,

Tho' nothing palls so much as too easy an Assurance of Means to gratify it, yet a little Hope is absolutely necessary to preserve it. The fiery Withes of *D'Elmont's* Soul, before chill'd by Despair, and half suppress'd with clouding Griefs, blaz'd now as fierce and vigorous as ever; and he found so much Probability in what the Baron said, that he was ready to adore him for the Contrivance.

THUS all Parties, but *Melliora*, remain'd in sort of a pleas'd Expectation. The Count doubted not of being happy, nor *Alovisa* of having her Curiosity satisfied by the Baron's Assistance, nor himself of the Reward he design'd to demand of her for that good Service, and each long'd impatiently for the Day, or rather Night, which was to bring this great Affair to a Period. Poor *Melliora* was the only Person who had no Interval of Comfort. Restrain'd by Honour, and inflam'd by Love, her very Soul was torn: And when she found that Count *D'Elmont* made no Attempt to get into her Chamber again, as she imagin'd he would, she fell into a Despair more terrible than all her former Inquietudes; she presently fancy'd that the Disappointment he had met with the Night before, had driven the hopeless Passion from his Heart, and the Thoughts of being no longer beloved by him, were unsupportable. She saw him not all that Day, nor the next, the Quarrel between him and *Alovisa* having caus'd separate Tables, she was oblig'd in Decency to eat at that where she was, and had the Mortification of hearing herself curs'd every Hour by the enrag'd Wife, in the Name of her unknown Rival, without daring to speak a Word in her own vindication.

IN the mean time the Baron, diligent to make good the Promises he had given the Count and *Alovisa*, for his own Ends, got every thing ready, and came himself to *D'Elmont's* House, to entreat their Company at his. Now, Madam (said he, to *Alovisa*) the Time is come to prove your Servant's Faith; this Night shall put an End to your Uncertainty. They had no Opportunity for further Speech; *Melliora* came that Moment into the Room, who being ask'd to go to the Ball, and seeming a little unwilling to appear at any publick Diversion by Reason of the late Death of her Father, put the Baron in a mortal Apprehension for the Success of his Undertaking: But *Alovisa* joining in his Entreaties, she was at last prevail'd upon: The Count went along with the Baron in his Chariot, and the Ladies soon follow'd in another.

THERE was a vast deal of Company there, and the Count danc'd with several of the Ladies, and was extremely gay amongst them: *Alovisa* watch'd his Behaviour, and regarded every one of them, in their Turn, with Jealousy, but was far from having the least Suspicion of her whom only she had Cause.

THO' *Melliora's* greatest Motive to go, was because she might have the Happiness of seeing her admir'd Count, a Blessing she had not enjoy'd these two Days, yet she took but little Satisfaction in that View, without an Opportunity of being spoke to by him. But that Uneasiness was remov'd, when the serious Dances being over, and they all joining in a grand Ballet, he every now and then got means to say a thousand tender things to her, press'd her Hand whenever he turn'd her, and would sometimes, when at a Distance from *Alovisa*, pretend to be out, on purpose to stand still and talk to her. This kind of Behaviour banish'd Part of her Sufferings; for tho' she could

could consider both his and her own Passion in no other View, than that of a very great Misfortune to them both; yet there are so many Pleasures, even in the Pains of Love, such tender Thrillings, such Soul-ravishing Amusements, attend some happy Moments of Contemplation, that those who most endeavour, can wish but faintly to be freed from.

WHEN it grew pretty late, the Baron made a Sign to the Count to follow him into a little Room joining to that where they were; and when he had, Now, my Lord (said he) I doubt not but this Night will make you entirely Possessor of your Wishes: I have prolonged the Entertainment, on Purpose to detain those, who are necessary for our Design, and have ordered a Chamber for *Melliora*, which has no Impediment to bar your Entrance. O! Thou best of Friends (answer'd *D'Elmont*) how shall I requite thy Goodness? In making (return'd the Baron) a right Use of the Opportunity I give you; for if you do not, you render fruitless all the Labours of my Brain, and make me wretched while my Friend is so. Oh! fear me not (cry'd *D'Elmont* in a Rapture) I will not be deny'd, each Faculty of my Soul is bent upon Enjoyment; tho' Death in all its various Horrors glare'd upon me, I'd scorn them all in *Melliora's* Arms—Oh! the very Name transports me—New fires my Blood, and tingles in my Veins—Imagination points out all her Charms—Methinks I see her lie in sweet Confusion—Fearing—Wishing—Melting—Her glowing Cheeks—Her closing Eyes—Her ever kindling—Oh! 'tis too vast for Thought! Even Fancy flags, and cannot reach her Wonders! As he was speaking, *Melantha*, who had taken Notice of his going out of the Room, and had followed him with a Design of talking to him, came time enough to hear the latter Part of what he said; but seeing her Brother

with him, withdrew with as much Haste as she came, and infinitely more Uneasiness of Mind; she was now but too well assured that she had a greater Difficulty than the Count's Matrimonial Engagement to get over, before she could reach his Heart, and was ready to burst with Vexation to think she was supplanted: Full of a thousand tormenting Reflections she return'd to the Ball-Room, and was so out of Humour all the Night, that she could hardly be commonly civil to any Body that spoke to her.

At last, the Hour so much desired by the Count, the Baron, and *Alovisa* (though for various Reasons) was arriv'd. The Company broke up; those who liv'd near, which were the greatest Part, went Home, the other being entreated by the Baron, to stay'd. When they were to be conducted to their Chambers, he call'd *Melantha*, and desired she would take care of the Ladies as he should direct; but above all, charg'd to place *Alovisa* and *Melliora* in two Chambers, which he shewed her.

MELANTHA was now let into the Secret she so much desir'd to know, the Name of her Rival, which she had not come time enough to hear when she did the Count's rapturous Description of her. She had before found out, that her Brother was in Love with *Alovisa*, and did not doubt but that there was a double Intrigue to be carry'd on that Night, and was the more confirm'd in that Opinion, when she remembered, that the Baron had order'd the Lock that Day to be taken off that Chamber where *Melliora* was to be lodg'd. It presently came into her Head to betray all she knew to *Alovisa*; but she soon rejected that Resolution for another, which she thought would give her a more pleasing Revenge. She conducted all the Ladies to such Chambers as she thought fit, and *Alovisa* to that her Brother had desired, having no Design of disappointing him; but

Melliora she led to one where she always lay herself, resolving to supply her Place in the other, where the Count was to come: Yes, (said she to herself) I will receive his Vows in *Melliora's* stead; and when I find him rais'd to the highest Pitch of Expectation, declare who I am, and awe him into Tamenefs: 'Twill be a charming Piece of Vengeance! besides, if he be not the most ungrateful Man on Earth, he must adore my Generosity, in not exposing him to his Wife, when I have him in my Power, after the Coldness he has used me with. She found something so pleasing in this Contrivance, that no Considerations whatever could have Power to deter her from pursuing it.

WHEN the Baron found every thing was silent and ready for his Purpose, he went softly to Count *D'Elmont's* Chamber, where he was impatiently expected; and taking him by the Hand, led him to that where he had order'd *Melliora* to be lodg'd. When they were at the Door, You see, my Lord (said he) I have kept my Promise; there lies the Idol of your Soul! go in, be bold, and all the Happiness you wish attend you. The Count was in too great a Hurry of disorder'd Thoughts to make him any other Answer than a passionate Embrace, and gently pushing open the Door, which had no Fastening to it, left the Baron to prosecute the remaining Part of his treacherous Design.

ALOVISA had all the Time of her being at the Baron's, endur'd most grievous Racks of Mind; her Husband appear'd to her that Night more gay and lovely, if possible, than ever; but that Contentment which sat upon his Face, and added to his Graces, rung her to the Soul, when she reflected how little Sympathy there was between them: Scarce a Month (said she to herself) was I bless'd with those Looks of Joy; a pensive Sullenness has dwelt

dwelt upon his Brow ever since till now; 'tis from my Ruin that his Pleasures flow, he hates me, and rejoices in a Pretence, tho' never so poor a one, to be absent from me. She was inwardly tofs'd with a Multitude of these and the like Perturbations, tho' the Assurance the Baron had given her of Revenge, made her conceal them tolerably well, while she was in Company; but when she was left alone in the Chamber, and perceiv'd the Baron did not come so soon as she expected, her Rage broke out in all the Violence imaginable: She gave a Loose to every foolish Passion, and when she saw him enter, Cruel *D'Espernay* (said she) where have you been!—Is this the Friendship which you vow'd? To leave me here distracted with my Griefs, while my perfidious Husband and the cursed She that robs me of him, are perhaps as happy as their guilty Love can make 'em? Madam (answer'd he) 'tis but a Moment since they are met: A Moment! (interrupted she) a Moment is too much, the smallest Particle of undivided Time, may make my Rival blest, and vastly recompense for all that my Revenge can do. Ah! Madam (resum'd the Baron) how dearly do you still love that most ungrateful Man! I had Hopes that the full Knowledge of his Falshood might have made you scorn the Scorners. I shall be able by To-morrow (reply'd the cunning *Alovisa*, who knew his Drift well enough) to give you a better Account of my Sentiments than now I can.---But why do we delay (continued she impatiently) are they not together?---The Baron saw this was no Time to press her farther, and therefore taking a Wax-Candle which stood on the Table in one Hand, and offering the other to lead her, I am ready, Madam (said he) to make good my Promise, and shall esteem no other Hours of my Life happy, but those which may be serviceable to you. They had only a small Part of a Gallery to go thro', and

Alovisa

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Alovisa had no time to answer to these last Words, if she had been compos'd enough to have done it, before they were at the Door, which as soon as the Baron had brought her to, he withdrew with all possible Speed.

Tho' the Count had been but a very little time in the Arms of his suppos'd *Melliora*, yet he had made so good use of it, and had taken so much Advantage of her complying Humour, that all his Fears were at an End; he now thought himself the most fortunate of all Mankind; and *Melantha* was far from repenting the Breach of the Resolution she had made of discovering herself to him. His Behaviour to her was all Rapture, all killing Extasy; and she flatter'd herself with a Belief, that when he should come to know to whom he ow'd that Bliss he had possess'd, he would not be ungrateful for it.

WHAT a confus'd Consternation must this Pair be in, when *Alovisa* rush'd into the Room! — 'Tis hard to say which was the greatest, the Count's Concern for his imagin'd *Melliora*'s Honour, or *Melantha*'s for her own; but if one may form a Judgment from the Levity of the one's Temper, and Generosity of the other's, one may believe that his had the Pre-eminence: But neither of them were so lost in Thought, as not to take what Measures the Time and Place would permit, to baffle the Fury of this incens'd Wife: *Melantha* slunk under the Cloaths, and the Count started up in the Bed at the first Appearance of the Light which *Alovisa* had in her Hand, and in the most angry Accent he could turn his Voice to, ask'd her the Reason of her coming there? Rage, at this Sight (prepar'd and arm'd for it as she was) took away all Power of Utterance from her; but she flew to the Bed, and began to tear the Cloaths (which *Melantha* held fast over her Head) in so violent a Manner, that the Count

found the only way to tame her, was to meet Force with Force; so jumping out, he seiz'd on her, and throwing her into a Chair, and holding her down in it, Madam, Madam (said he) you are mad, and I as such shall use you, unless you promise to return quietly, and leave me. She could yet bring forth no other Words, than Villain,—Monster! — and such-like Names, which her Passion and Injury suggested, which he but little regarded, but for the Noise she made: For Shame (resum'd he) expose not thus yourself and me; if you cannot command your Temper, at least confine your Clamours—I will not stir (said she, raving and struggling to get loose) till I have seen the Face that has undone me; I'll tear out her bewitching Eyes, the curst Adulteress! and leave her Mistress of fewer Charms than thou can'st find in me. She spoke this with so elevated a Voice, that the Count endeavour'd to stop her Mouth, that she might not alarm the Company that were in the House; but he could not do it time enough to prevent her from shrieking out Murder! Help! or the barbarous Man will kill me! At these Words the Baron came running in immediately, full of Surprise and Rage at something he had met with in the mean time: How came this Woman here? cry'd the Count to him. Ask me not, my Lord (said he) for I can answer nothing; but every thing this cursed Night, I think, has happen'd by Enchantment. He was going to say something more, but several of his Guests hearing a Noise, and Cry of Murder, and directed by the Lights they saw in that Room, came in, and presently after a great many of the Servants, that the Chamber was as full as it could hold: The Count let go his Wife on the Sight of the first Stranger that enter'd; and indeed there was no need of his confining her in that Place (tho' he knew not so much) for the Violence of so many contrary Passions warring in her

Breast

Breast at once, had thrown her into a Swoon, and she fell back when he let go his hold of her, motionless, and in all Appearance, dead. The Count said little, but began to put on his Cloaths, ashamed of the Posture he had been seen in; but the Baron endeavour'd to persuade the Company, that it was only a Family Quarrel of no Consequence, told them he was sorry for the Disturbance it had given them, and desir'd them to return to their Rest; and when the Room was pretty clear, order'd two or three of the Maids to carry *Alovisa* to her Chamber, and apply things proper for her Recovery: As they were bearing her out, *Melliora*, who had been frighted as well as the rest with the Noise she heard, was running along the Gallery to see what had happen'd, and met them; her Trouble to find *Alovisa* in that Condition was unfeign'd, and she assisted those that were employed about her, and accompany'd them where they carry'd her.

THE Count was going to the Bed-side to comfort the conceal'd Fair, that lay still under the Cloaths, when he saw *Melliora* at the Door: What Surprise was ever equal to his at that View? —He stood like one transfix'd with Thunder; he knew not what to think, or rather could not think at all, confounded with the seeming Impossibility. He beheld the Person whom he thought had lain in his Arms, whom he had enjoy'd, whose Bulk and Proportion he still saw on the Bed, whom he was just going to address to, and for whom he had been in all the Agonies of Soul imaginable, come from a distant Chamber, and unconcern'd, ask'd coolly, how *Alovisa* came to be taken ill! He look'd confusedly about, sometimes on *Melliora*, sometimes towards the Bed, and sometimes on the Baron: Am I awake! (said he) or is every thing I see and hear, Illusion? The Baron could not presently resolve after what manner he should

answer, tho' he perfectly knew the Truth of this Adventure, and who was in Bed; for, when he had conducted *Alovisa* to that Room, in order to make the Discovery he had promised, he went to his Sister's Chamber, designing to abscond there, in Case the Count should fly out on his Wife's Entrance, and seeing him there, imagine who it was that betray'd him; and finding the Door shut, knockt and call'd to have it open'd. *Melliora*, who began to think she should lie in Quiet no where, ask'd who was there? and what he would have? I would speak with my Sister (reply'd he, as much astonish'd then, to hear who it was that answer'd him, as the Count was now to see her) and *Melliora* having assured him that she was not with her, left him no Room to doubt, but what means the Exchange had been made: Few Men, how amorous soever themselves, care that the Female Part of their Family should be so; and he was most sensibly mortified with it; but reflecting that it could not be kept a Secret, at least from the Count; My, Lord (said he, pointing to the Bed) there lies the Cause of your Amazement! that Wicked Woman has betray'd the Trust I repos'd in her, and deceiv'd both you and me; Rise, continu'd he, throwing open the Curtains, thou Shame of thy Sex, and everlasting Blot and Scandal of that noble House thou art descended from; rise, I say, or I will stab thee here in the Scene of Guilt. In speaking these Words, he drew out his Sword, and appeared in such a real Fury, that the Count, tho' more and more amaz'd with every thing he saw and heard, made no doubt but he would do as he said, and ran to hold his Arm.

As no Woman that is Mistress of a great Share of Wit, *will* be a Coquet, so no Woman that has not a little, *can* be one: *Melantha*, though frighted to Death with these unexpected Occurrences, feign'd a Courage, which she had not in Reality,

Reality, and thrusting her Head a little above the Cloaths; Bless me, Brother (said she) I vow I do not know what you mean by all this Bustle, neither am I guilty of any Crime: I was vex'd indeed to be made a Property of, and chang'd Beds with *Melliora* for a little innocent Revenge; for I always design'd to discover myself to the Count time enough to prevent Mischief. The Baron was not so silly as to believe what she said, tho' the Count, as much as he hated her, had too much Generosity to contradict her; and keeping still hold of the Baron, Come, *D'Espernay* (said he) I believe your Sister's Stars and mine have from our Birth been at Variance, for this is the third Disappointment she has given me; once in *Melliora's* Chamber, then in the Wilderness, and now here; but I forgive her, therefore let us retire and leave her to her Repose. The Baron was sensible that all the Rage in the World could not recall what had been done, and only giving her a furious Look, went with the Count out of the Room, without saying any thing more to her at that time.

THE Baron, with much entreating, at last prevailed on Count *D'Elmont* to go into his Bed, where he accompanied him; but they were both of them too full of troubled Meditations to sleep; His Sister's Indiscretion vex'd the Baron to the Heart, and took away great Part of the Joy, for the fresh Occasion the Count had given *Alovisa* to withdraw her Affections from him. But with what Words can the various Passions that agitated the Soul of *D'Elmont* be describ'd? The Transports he had enjoy'd in an imaginary Felicity, were now turn'd to so many real Horrors; he saw himself exposed to all the World, for it would have been Vanity to the last Degree, to believe this Adventure would be kept a Secret; but what gave him the most bitter Reflection was, that *Melliora*, when she should know it, as he could

could not doubt but she immediately would be told it by *Alovisa*, would judge of it by the Appearance, and believe him at once, the most vicious and most false of Men. As for his Wife, he thought not of her with any Compassion for her Sufferings, but with Rage and Hate, for that jealous Curiosity which he suppos'd had led her to watch his Actions that Night (for he had not the least Suspicion of the Baron.) *Melantha* he always despis'd, but now detested, for the Trick she had put upon him, yet thought it would be not only unmanly, but barbarous to let her know he did so. It was in vain for him to endeavour to come to a Determination after what manner he should behave himself to any of them; and when the Night was passed in forming a thousand several Resolutions, the Morning found him as much to seek as before: He took his leave early of the Baron, not being willing to see any of the Company after what had happen'd, till he was more compos'd.

HE was not deceiv'd in his Conjectures concerning *Melliora*; for *Alovisa* was no sooner recovered from her Swoon, than she, with bitter Exclamations, told her what had been the Occasion, and put that astonish'd fair one into such a visible Disorder, as had she not been too full of Misery, to take notice of it, had made her easily perceive that she was deeply interested in the Story: But whatever she said against the Count, as she could not forbear sometimes, calling him ungrateful, perjur'd, deceitful, and inconstant, *Alovisa* took only as a Proof of Friendship to herself, and the Effects of that just Indignation all Women ought to feel for him, that takes a Pride in injuring any one of them.

WHEN the Count was gone, the Baron sent to *Alovisa* to enquire of her Health, and if he might have leave to visit her in her Chamber, and being told she desired he should, resolv'd now to make

make his Demand. *Melliora* had but just parted from her, in order to get herself ready to go home, and she was alone when he came in. As soon as the first Civilities were over, she began afresh to conjure him to let her know the Name of her Rival, which he artfully evading, tho' not absolutely denying, made her almost distracted; the Baron carefully observ'd her every Look and Motion, and when he found her Impatience was rais'd to the highest Degree; Madam (said he, taking her by the Hand, and looking tenderly on her) you cannot blame a Wretch who has lavish'd all he had away to one poor Jewel, to make the most he can of that, to supply his future Wants: I have already forfeited all Pretence to Honour, and even common Hospitality, by betraying the Trust that was repos'd in me, and exposing under my own Roof the Man who takes me for his dearest Friend; and what else I have suffer'd from that unavoidable Impulse which compell'd me to do all this, yourself may judge, who too well know the Pangs and Tortures of neglected Love—Therefore (continued he, with a deep Sigh) since this last Reserve is all my Hope's Dependance; do not, oh, charming *Alovisa*, think me mercenary, if I presume to set a Price upon it, which I confess too high, yet nothing less can purchase. No Price, cry'd *Alovisa* (who thought a little Condescension was necessary to win him to her Purpose) can be too dear to buy my Peace, nor Recompence too great for such a Service. What, not your Love, said the Baron, eagerly kissing her Hand? No (resum'd she, forcing herself to look kindly on him) not even that, when such a Proof of yours engages it; but do not keep me longer on the Rack, give me the Name and then—She spoke these last Words with such an Air of Languishment, that the Baron thought his Work was done, and growing bolder, from her Hand he proceeded to her

Lips, and answered her only in Kisses, which distasteful as they were to her, she suffer'd him to take, without Resistance; but that was not all he wanted, and believing this the critical Minute, he threw his Arms about her Waist, and began to draw her by little and little towards the Bed; which she affected to permit with a kind of an unwilling Willingness; saying, Well, if you would have me able to deny you nothing you can ask, tell me the Name I so much wish to know: But the Baron was as cunning as she, and seeing thro' her Artifice, was resolv'd to make sure of his Reward first: Yes, yes, my adorable *Alovisa* (answer'd he, having brought her now very near the Bed) you shall immediately know all; thy Charms will force the Secret from my Breast, close as it is lodged within my inmost Soul.—Dying with Rapture, I will tell thee all.—If that a Thought of this injurious Husband, can interpose amidst extatick Joys. What will not some Women venture, to satisfy a jealous Curiosity? *Alovisa* had feign'd to consent to his Desires (in hopes to engage him to a Discovery) so far, and had given him so many Liberties, that now, it was as much as she could do to save herself from the utmost Violence; and perceiving she had been out-witted, and that nothing but the really yielding up her Honour, could oblige him to reveal what she desired. Villain (said she, struggling to get loose from his Embrace) dare thy base Soul believe so vilely of me? Release me from thy detested Hold, or my Cries shall force thee to it, and proclaim thee what thou art, a Monster! The Baron was not enough deluded by her Pretence of Kindness, to be much surpriz'd at this sudden Turn of her Behaviour, and only coolly answer'd, Madam, I have no Design of using Violence, but perceive, if I had depended on your Gratitude, I had been miserably deceiv'd. Yes, (said she, looking contemptibly on him) I own thou would'st; for

for whatsoever I might say, or thou could'st hope, I love my Husband still, with an unbated Fondness, doat upon him ! Faithless and cruel as he is, he is still lovely ; his Eyes lose nothing of their Brightness, nor his Tongue its Softness ! his very Frowns have more Attraction in them than the Smiles of any other Man ! and can'st thou think ! thou, so different in all from him, that thou seemest not the same Species of Humanity, nor oughtest to stile thyself a Man, since he is no more : Can'st thou, I say, believe a Woman, blest'd as *Alovisa* has been, can e'er blot out the dear Remembrance, and quit her Hopes of re-gain'd Paradise in his Embrace, for certain Hell in thine ? She spoke these Words with so much Scorn, that the Baron, skill'd as he was in every Art to tempt, could not conceal the Spite he conceiv'd at them, and letting go her Hand, (which perforce he had held) I leave you, Madam (said he) to the Pleasure of enjoying your own Humour ; neither that, nor your Circumstances are to be envy'd ; but I'd have you to remember, that you are your own Tormentor, while you refuse the only Means can bring you Ease. I will have Ease another Way (said she, incens'd at the Indignity she imagin'd he treated her with) and if you still persist in refusing to discover to me the Person who has injur'd me, I shall make no Difficulty of letting the Count know how much of his Secrets, you have imparted, and for what Reason you conceal the other. You may do so (answer'd he) and I doubt not but you will—Mischief is the darling Favourite of Woman ! Blood is the Satisfaction, perhaps, that you require, and if I fall by him, or he by me, your Revenge will have its Aim, either on the unloving or unloved ; for me, I set my Life at nought, without your Love 'tis Hell ; but do not think that even dying, to purchase Absolution, I'd reveal one Letter of that Name you so much wish to hear ; the Secret shall

be

be buried with me.—Yes, Madam, (continued he, with a malicious Air) that happy Fair unknown, whose Charms have made you wretched, shall undiscover'd and unguess'd at, triumph in those Joys you think none but your Count can give. *Alovisa* had not an Opportunity to make any Answer to what he said; *Melliora* came that Moment into the Room, and ask'd if she was ready to go, and *Alovisa* saying that she was, they both departed from the Baron's House without much Ceremony on either Side.

ALOVISA had not been long at Home, before a Messenger came to acquaint her, that her Sister having miss'd of her at *Paris*, was now on her Journey to *le Beauffe*, and would be with her in a few Hours: She rejoic'd as much at this News, as it was possible for one so full of Disquiet to do, and order'd her Chariot and Six to be made ready again, and went to meet her.

D'ELMONT heard of *Ansellina's* coming almost as soon as *Alovisa*, and his Complaisance for Ladies, join'd with the extreme Desire he had of seeing his Brother, whom he believ'd was with her, would certainly have given him Wings to have flown to them with all imaginable Speed, had not the late Quarrel between him and his Wife, made him think it improper to join Company with her on any Account whatever: He was sitting in his Dressing-Room Window in a melancholy and disturbed Meditation, ruminating on every Circumstance of his last Night's Adventure, when he perceiv'd a couple of Horsemen come galloping over the Plain, and make directly toward his House. The Dust they made, kept him from distinguishing who they were, and they were very near the Gate before he discover'd them to be the Chevalier *Brilliant*, and his Servant: The Surprize he was in to see him without *Ansellina* was very great, but much more so, when
running

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running down, as soon as he saw he was alighted, and opening his Arms eagerly to embrace him; the other drawing back, No, my Lord, (said he) since you are pleas'd to forget I am your Brother, I pretend no other way to merit your Embraces; Nor can think it any Happiness to hold him in my Arms, who keeps me distant from his Heart, What mean you? (cry'd *D'Elmont*, extremely astonish'd at his Behaviour.) You know so little (resum'd the Chevalier) of the Power of Love yourself, that perhaps you think I ought not to resent what you have done to ruin me in mine: But, however, Sir, Ambition is a Passion which you are not a Stranger to, and having settled your own Fortune according to your Wish, methinks you should not wonder that I take it ill, when you endeavour to prevent my doing so to. The Count was perfectly confounded at these Words, and looking earnestly on him; Brother (said he) you seem to lay a heavy Accusation on me; but if you still retain so much of that former Affection which was between us, as to desire I should be clear'd in your Esteem, you must be more plain in your Charge; for tho' I easily perceive that I am wrong'd, I cannot see by what means I am so. My Lord, you are not wrong'd (cry'd the Chevalier hastily) you know you are not: If my Tongue were silent, the Despair that sits upon my Brow, my alter'd Looks, and Grief-sunk Eyes would proclaim your barbarous——most unnatural Usage of me. Ungrateful *Brilliant* (said the Count, at once inflam'd with Tenderness and Anger) is this the Consolation I expected from your Presence? I know not for what Cause I am upbraided, being innocent of any, nor what your Troubles are; but I am sure my own are such, as needed not this Weight to overwhelm me. He spoke this so feelingly, and concluded with so deep a Sigh, as most sensibly

sensibly touch'd the Heart of *Brilliant*. If I could believe that you had any (reply'd he) it were enough to sink me quite, and rid me of a Life which *Ansellina's* Loss has made me hate. What said you (interrupted the Count) *Ansellina's* Loss? If that be true, I pardon all the Wildness of your unjust Reproaches; for well I know, Despair has small regard to Reason; but quickly speak the Cause of your Misfortune:— I was about to enquire the Reason that I saw you not together, when your unkind Behaviour drove it from my Thoughts. That Question (answer'd the Chevalier) ask'd by you some Days since, would have put me past all the Remains of Patience: but I begin to hope I am not so unhappy as I thought, but still am blest in Friendship, tho' undone in Love—but I'll not keep you longer in Suspence, my Tale of Grief is short in the repeating, tho' everlasting in its Consequence. In saying this he sat down, and the Count doing the like, and assuring him of Attention, he began his Relation in this Manner.

YOUR Lordship may remember that I gave you an Account by Letter, of *Ansellina's* Indisposition and the Fears I was in for her; but by the time I receiv'd your Answer, I thought myself the happiest of Mankind; She was perfectly recovered, and every Day I received new Proofs of her Affection: We began to talk now of coming to *Paris*, and she seem'd no less impatient for that Journey than myself; and one Evening, the last I ever had the Honour of her Conversation, she told me, that in spite of the Physician's Caution, she would leave *Amiens* in three or four Days: You may be sure I did not dissuade her from that Resolution; but, how great was my Astonishment, when going the next Morning to the Baroness's to give the Ladies the *Bon-jour*, as I constantly did every Morning, I perceiv'd an unusual Coldness in the

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the Face of every one in the Family; the Baroneſs herſelf ſpoke not to me, but to tell me that *Anſellina* would ſee no Company: How, Madam, ſaid I, am I not excepted from thoſe general Orders? what can this ſudden Alteration in my Fortune mean? I ſuppoſe (reply'd ſhe) that *Anſellina* has her Reaſons for what ſhe does: I ſaid all that Deſpair could ſuggeſt; to oblige her to give me ſome Light into this Myſtery; but all was in vain, ſhe either made me no Answer, or ſuch as was not ſatisfactory; and growing weary with being importun'd, ſhe abruptly went out of the Room, and left me in a Confuſion not to be expreſs'd. I renewed my Viſit the next Day, and was then deny'd Admittance by the Porter: The ſame the following one; and as Servants commonly form their Behaviour according to that of thoſe they ſerve, it was eaſy for me to obſerve, I was far from being a welcome Gueſt. I writ to *Anſellina*, but had my Letter return'd unopen'd; and that Scorn ſo unjuſtly thrown upon me, tho' it did not abſolutely cure my Paſſion, yet it ſtirr'd up ſo much juſt Reſentment in me, that it abated very much of its Tenderneſs. About a Fortnight I remain'd in this Perplexity, and at the end of it was plung'd into a greater, when I receiv'd a little *Billet* from *Anſellina*, which, as I remember, contained theſe Words.



ANSELLINA to the Chevalier
BRILLIAN.

I Sent your Letter back without peruſing, believing it might contain ſomething of a Subject which I am reſolv'd to encourage no farther: I do not think it proper at preſent to acquaint you with my Reaſons for it;

it; but if I see you at Paris, you shall know them; I set out thence To-morrow, but desire you not to pretend to accompany me thither, if you would preserve the Esteem of

ANSELLINA.

I CANNOT but say I thought this manner of proceeding very odd, and vastly different from that Openness of Nature I always admir'd in her; but as I had been always a most obsequious Lover, I resolv'd not to forfeit that Character, and give a Proof of an implicate Obedience to her Will, tho' with what Anxiety of Mind you may imagine. I stood at a Distance, and saw her take Coach; and as soon as her Attendants were out of Sight, I got on Horseback and follow'd; I several times lay at the same Inn where she did, but took care not to appear before her: Never was any Sight more pleasing to me than that of *Paris*, because I there hop'd to have my Destiny unravell'd; but your being out of Town, preventing her making any Stay, I was reduc'd to another Trial of Patience. About seven Furlongs from hence, happening to bait at the same Cabaret with her, I saw her Woman, who had been always perfectly obliging to me, walking alone in the Garden; I took the Liberty to shew myself to her, and ask her some Questions concerning my future Fate, to which she answer'd with all the Freedom I could desire; and observing the Melancholy, which was but too apparent in my Countenance; Sir, said she, tho' I think nothing can be more blame-worthy than to betray the Secrets of our Superiors, yet I hope I shall stand excus'd for declaring so much of my Lady's as the Condition you are in seems to require; I would not therefore have you believe that in this Separation you are the only Sufferer, I can assure you my Lady bears her part of Sorrow too.—How can
that

that be possible (cry'd I) when my Misfortune is brought upon me only by the Change of her Inclination? Far from it (answer'd she) you have a Brother—he only is to blame, she has receiv'd Letters from Madam *D'Elmont*, which have—— As she was speaking, she was call'd hastily away, without being able to finish what she was about to say, and I was so impatient to hear: Her naming you in such a Manner, planted ten thousand Daggers in my Soul! —— What could I imagine by those Words, *You have a Brother, he only is to blame*, and her mentioning Letters from that Brother's Wife; but that is was through you I was made wretched? I repeated several times over to myself what she had said, but could wrest no other Meaning from it, than that you being already possess'd of the elder Sister's Fortune, was willing to engross the other's too, by preventing her from marrying. Pardon me, my Lord, if I have injur'd you, since I protest, the Thought of your designing my Undoing was, if possible, more dreadful to me than the Ill itself.

You will, reply'd the Count, be soon convinc'd how little Hand I had in those Letters, whatever they contain'd, when you have been here a few Days. He then told him of the Disagreement between himself and *Alovisa*, her perpetual Jealousy, her Pride, her Rage, and the little Probability there was of their being ever reconciled, so as to live together as they ought, omitting nothing of the Story, but his Love for *Melliora*, and the Cause he had given to create this Uneasiness. They both concluded that *Ansellina's* Alteration of Behaviour was intirely owing to something her Sister had written, and that she would use her utmost Endeavour to break off the Match wholly in Revenge to her Husband: As they were discoursing on Means to prevent it, the Ladies came to the Gate; they saw them through the Window,

Window, and ran to receive them immediately. The Count handed *Ansellina* out of the Coach, with great Complaisance, while the Chevalier would have done the same by *Alovisa*, but she would not permit him, which the Count observing, when he had paid those Compliments to her Sister, which he thought Civility requir'd, Madam (said he, turning to her, and frowning) is it not enough, you make me wretched by your continual Clamours and Upbraidings, but that your Ill-nature must extend to all whom you believe I love? She answered him only with a disdainful Look, and haughty Toss, which spoke the Pleasure she took in having it in her Power to give him Pain, and went out of the Room with *Ansellina*.

D'ELMONT's Family was now become a most distracted one, every body was in Confusion, and it was hard for a disinterested Person to know how to behave among them: The Count was ready to die with Vexation, when he reflected on the Adventure at the Baron's with *Melantha*, and how hard it would be to clear his Conduct in that Point with *Melliora*: She, on the other hand, was as much tormented at his attempting it. The Chevalier was in the Height of Despair when he found that *Ansellina* continued her Humour, and still avoided letting him know the Occasion of it; and *Alovisa*, though she contented herself for some Hours with relating to her Sister all the Passions of her Husband's unkind Usage of her, yet when that was over, her Curiosity return'd, and she grew so madly zealous to find out who her Rival was, that she repented her Behaviour to the Baron, and sent him next Day, privately, a *Billet*, wherein she assur'd him, that she had acquainted the Count with nothing that had pass'd between them, and she desir'd to speak with him. 'Tis easy to be believ'd he needed not a second Invitation;

tion; he came immediately, and *Alovisa* renewed her Entreaties in the most pressing Manner she was capable of, but in vain. He told her plainly, that if he could not have her Heart, nothing but the full Possession of her Person should extort the Secret from him, 'Twould swell this Discourse beyond what I design, to recount her various Starts of Passions, and different Turns of Behaviour, sometimes louder than the Winds, she rav'd! commanded! threatened! Then, still as *April Showers*, or Summer Dews, she wept and only whisper'd her Complaints; now dissembling Kindness, then declaring unfeign'd Hate; till at last, finding it impossible to prevail by any other Means, she promis'd to admit him at Midnight into her Chamber: But as it was only the Force of her two passionate Affection for her Husband, which had work'd her to this Pitch of raging Jealousy, so she had no sooner made the Assignment, and the Baron had left her (to seek the Count, to prevent any Suspicion of their long Conversation) but all *D'Elmont's* Charms came fresh into her Mind, and made the Thoughts of what she had promis'd, odious and insupportable; she open'd her Mouth, more than once to call back the Baron, and recant all she had said; but her ill Genius, or that Devil, Curiosity, which too much haunts the Minds of Women, still prevented her: What will become of me (said she to herself)? what is it I am about to do? Shall I forego my Honour——quit my Virtue——fully my yet unspotted Name with endless Infamy——and yield my Soul to Sin, to Shame, and Horror, only to know what I can never redress?——If *D'Elmont* hates me now, will he not do so still?——What will this curs'd Discovery bring me but added Tortures, and fresh Weight of Woe? Happy had it been for her if these Considerations could have lasted; but when she had been a Minute or two in this Temper, she would
relapse

relapse and cry, What ! must I tamely bear it then — Endure the Flouts of the malicious World, and the Contempt of every saucy Girl, who while she pities, scorns my Want of Charms — Shall I neglected tell my Tale of Wrongs, (Oh ! Hell is that Thought) 'till my Despair shall reach my Rival's Ears, and crown her adulterous Joys with double Pleasure ! — Wretch that I am ! — Fool that I am, to hesitate ; my Misery is already past Addition, my everlasting Peace is broke ; lost even to Hope, what can I more endure ? — No, since I must be ruin'd, I'll have the Satisfaction of dragging with me to Perdition, the vile, the curst She that has undone me : I'll be reveng'd on her, then die my self, and free me from Pollution. As she was in this last Thought, she perceived at a good Distance from her the Chevalier *Brilliant* and *Ansellina* in Discourse ; the Sight of him immediately put a new Contrivance into her Head, and she compos'd herself as she could, and went to meet them.

ANSELLINA having been left alone, while her Sister was entertaining the Baron, had walk'd down into the Garden to divert herself, where the Chevalier, who was on the Watch for such an Opportunity, had follow'd her ; he could not forbear, though, in Terms full of Respect, taxing her with some little Injustice for her late Usage of him, and Breach of Promise, in not letting him know her Reasons for it. She, who by Nature was extremely averse to the disguising her Sentiments, suffer'd him not long to press her for an *Eclaircissement*, and with her usual Freedom, told him what she had done, was purely in Compliance with her Sister's Request ; that she could not help having the same Opinion of him as ever, but that she had promis'd *Alovisa* to defer any Thoughts of marrying him, till his Brother should confess his Error : The obliging things she said to him, tho' she persisted in her Resolution, dissipated great

Part of his Chagrin, and he was beginning to excuse *D'Elmont*, and persuade her that her Sister's Temper was the first Occasion of their Quarrel, when *Alovisa* interrupted them. *Ansellina* was a little out of Countenance at her Sister's Presence, imagining she would be incens'd at finding her with the Chevalier; but that distressed Lady was full of other Thoughts, and desiring him to follow her to her Chamber, as soon as they were set down, confess'd to him, how, fir'd with his Brother's Falseness, she endeavour'd to revenge it upon him; that she had been his Enemy, but was willing to enter into Measures for his Satisfaction, provided he would comply with one, which she should propose; which he faithfully promising, after she had sworn him to Secrecy, discover'd to him every Circumstance, from her first Cause of Jealousy to the Assignment she had made with the Baron. Now, said she, it is in your Power to preserve both your Brother's Honour and my Life (which I sooner will resign than my Virtue) if you stand conceal'd in a little Closet, which I shall convey you to, and the Moment he has satisfy'd my Curiosity, by telling me her Name that has undone me, rush out and be my Protector. The Chevalier was infinitely surpriz'd at what he heard, for his Brother had not given him the least Hint of his Passion, but thought the Request she made too reasonable to be deny'd.

WHILE they were in this Discourse, *Meliora*, who had been sitting indulging her Melancholy in that Closet which *Alovisa* spoke of, and which did not immediately belong to that Chamber, but was a sort of an Entry or Passage into another; and, tir'd with Reflection, was fallen asleep, but on the Noise which *Alovisa* and the Chevalier made in coming in, wak'd, and heard, to her inexpressible Trouble, the Discourse that pass'd between them; she knew that

that unknown Rival was herself, and condemn'd the Count of the highest Imprudence, in making a Confident, as she found he had, of the Baron; she saw her Fate, at least that of her Reputation, was now upon the Crisis; that that very Night, she was to be expos'd to all the Fury of an enrag'd Wife, and was so shook with Apprehension, that she was scarce able to go out of the Closet time enough to prevent their discovering she was there: What could she do in this Exigence? the Thoughts of being betray'd, were worse to her than a thousand Deaths, and it was to be wonder'd at, as she has since confess'd, that in the Height of Desperation, she had not put an End to the Tortures of Reflection, by laying violent Hands on her own Life. As she was going from the Closet hastily to her own Apartment, the Count and Baron pass'd her, and that Sight heightening the Distraction she was in, she stept to the Count, and in a faltering, scarce intelligible Accent, whisper'd, For Heaven's Sake let me speak with you before Night; make some Pretence to come to my Chamber, where I'll wait for you. And as soon as she had spoke these Words, darted from him so swift, that he had no Opportunity of replying, if he had not been too much overwhelmed with Joy at this seeming Change of Fortune to have done it; he misunderstood Part of what she said, and instead of her desiring to speak with him *before Night*, he imagin'd she said *at Night*. He presently communicated it to the Baron, who congratulated him upon it; and never was any Night more long'd for, than this by them both. They had not indeed many Hours of Expectation, but *Melliora* thought them Ages, all her Hopes were, that if she could have an Opportunity of discovering to Count *D'Elmont* what she had heard between his Wife and Brother, he might find some Means to prevent the Baron's Treachery from taking Effect. But when Night

grew

grew on, and she perceiv'd he came not, and she consider'd how near she was to inevitable Ruin, what Words can sufficiently express her Agonies? So I shall only say, they were too violent to have long kept Company with Life. Guilt, Horror, Fear, Remorse, and Shame, at once oppress'd her, and she was very near sinking beneath their Weight, when somebody knock'd softly at the Door; she made no doubt but it was the Count, and open'd it immediately, and he catching her in his Arms with all the Eagerness of transported Love, she was about to clear his Mistake, and let him know it was not an amorous Entertainment he expected from him, when a sudden Cry of Murder, and the Noise of clashing Swords, made him let go his hold, and draw his own, and run along the Gallery to find out the Occasion; where being in the Dark, and only directed by the Noise he heard in his Wife's Chamber, something met the Count, and a great Shriek following it; he cry'd for Lights, but none coming immediately, he stepping farther, stumbled at the Body which had fallen: He then redoubled his Outcries, and *Melliora*, frighted as she was, brought one from her Chamber, and at the same Instant that they discover'd it was *Alovisa*, who coming to alarm the Family, had by Accident run on her Husband's sword, they saw the Chevalier pursuing the Baron, who, mortally wounded, dropt down by *Alovisa's* Side. What a dreadful View was this! The Count, *Melliora*, and the Servants, who by this Time were most of them rouz'd, seem'd without Sense or Motion; only the Chevalier had spirit enough to speak, or think; so stupify'd was every one with what they saw. But he ordering the Servants to take up the Bodies, sent one of them immediately for a Surgeon, but they were both past his Art to cure; *Alovisa* spoke no more, and the Baron liv'd but two Days, in which

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time the whole Account, as it was gather'd from the Mouths of those chiefly concern'd, was set down, and the tragical Part of it being laid before the King, there appear'd so much of Justice in the Baron's Death, and Accident in *Alovisa's*, that the Count and Chevalier found it no difficult Matter to obtain their Pardon. The Chevalier was soon after married to his beloved *Ansellina*; but *Meliora* look'd on herself as the most guilty Person upon Earth, as being the primary Cause of all the Misfortunes that had happen'd, and retir'd immediately to a Monastery, from which, not all the Entreaties of her Friends, nor the Implorations of the amorous *D'Elmont*, could bring her; she was resolv'd now to punish, by a voluntary Banishment from all she ever did, or could love, the Guilt of indulging that Passion while it was a Crime. He, not able to live without her, at least in the same Climate, committed the Care of his Estate to his Brother, and went to travel, without an Inclination ever to return. *Melantha*, who was not of a Humour to take any thing to Heart, was married in a short Time, and had the good Fortune not to be suspected by her Husband, though she brought him a Child in seven Months after her Wedding.

End of the SECOND PART.





LOVE in EXCESS:

OR, THE

FATAL ENQUIRY.

PART the THIRD.



HO' Count *D'Elmont* never had any Tendernefs for *Alovisa*, and her Extravagance of Rage and Jealoufy, join'd to his Paffion for *Meliora*, had every Day abated it, yet the Manner of her Death was too great a Shock to the Sweetnefs of his Difpofition, to be eafily worn off; he cou'd not remember her Uneafinefs, without reflecting that itprung only from her too violent Affection for him; and tho' there was no Poffibility of living happily with her, when he confider'd that fhe died not only for him, but by his Hand, his Compaffion for the

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Cause, and Horror for the unwish'd, as well as undesign'd Event, drew Lamentations from him, more sincere, perhaps, than some Husbands, who call themselves very loving Ones, wou'd make.

To alleviate the Troubles of his Mind, he had endeavour'd all he cou'd, to persuade *Melliora* to continue in his House; but that afflicted Lady was not to be prevail'd upon; she look'd on herself, as in a manner, accessary to *Alovisa's* Death, and thought the least she ow'd to her Reputation was to see the Count no more; and tho' in the forming this Resolution, she felt Torments unconceivable, yet the Strength of her Virtue enabled her to keep it, and she return'd to the Monastery, where she had been educated, carrying with her nothing of that Peace of Mind with which she left it.

NOT many Days pass'd between her Departure and the Count's; he took his way towards *Italy*, by the Persuasions of his Brother, who, since he found him bent to travel, hop'd that Garden of the World might produce something to divert his Sorrows: He took two Servants with him, and those rather for Conveniency than State: *Ambition*, once his darling Passion, was now wholly extinguish'd in him by these Misfortunes, and he no longer thought of making a Figure in the World; but his *Love* nothing cou'd abate, and 'tis to be believ'd that the Violence of that wou'd have driven him to the Use of some fatal Remedy, if the Chevalier *Brilliant*, to whom he left the Care of *Melliora's* and her Brother's Fortune as well as his own, had not, tho' with much Difficulty, obtain'd a Promise from her, of conversing with him by Letters.

THIS was all he had to keep Hope alive; and indeed it was no inconsiderable Consolation; for she that allows a Correspondence of that kind with

a Man that has any Interest in her Heart, can never persuade herself, while she does so, to make him become indifferent to her. When we give ourselves the Liberty of even talking of the Person we have once lov'd, and find the least Pleasure in that Discourse, 'tis ridiculous to imagine we are free from that Passion, without which, the mention of it would be but insipid to our Ears; and the Remembrance to our Minds; tho' our Words are never so cold, they are the Effects of a secret Fire, which burns not with less Strength for not being dilated. The Count had too much Experience of all the Walks and Turns of Passion to be ignorant of this, if *Melliora* had endeavour'd to disguise her Sentiments; but she went not so far; she thought it a sufficient Vindication of her Virtue, to with-hold the rewarding of his Love, without feigning a Coldness to which she was a Stranger; and he had the Satisfaction to observe a Tenderness in her Stile, which assur'd him, that her *Heart* was unalterably his, and very much strengthen'd his Hopes, that one Day her Person might be so too, when Time had a little effac'd the Memory of those Circumstances, which had oblig'd her to put this Constraint on her Inclinations.

HE wrote to her from every Post-Town, and waited till he receiv'd an Answer: By this means his Journey was extremely tedious; but no Adventures of any Moment falling in his Way till he came to *Rome*, I shall not trouble my Readers with a Recital of Particulars which cou'd be no way entertaining.

BUT how strangely do they deceive themselves, who fancy that they are Lovers, yet on every little Turn of Fortune, or Change of Circumstance, are agitated with any Vehemence, by Cares of a far different Nature? *Love* is too jealous, too arbitrary a Monarch to suffer any other Passion to equalize

himself in that Heart where he has fix'd his Throne, When once enter'd, he becomes the whole Business of our Lives: we think — we dream of nothing else, nor have a Wish not inspir'd by him: Those who have the Power to apply themselves so seriously to any other Consideration as to forget him, tho' but for a Moment, are but Lovers in Conceit, and have entertain'd Desire but as an agreeable Amusement, which when attended with any Inconvenience, they may without much Difficulty shake off. Such a Sort of Passion may be properly enough call'd *Liking*, but falls widely short of *Love*. *Love*, is what we can neither resist, expel, nor even alleviate, if we should ever so vigorously attempt it; and tho' some have boasted, Thus far will I yield, and no farther, they have been convinc'd of the Vanity of forming such Resolutions by the Impossibility of keeping them. *Liking*, is a flashy Flame, which is to be kept alive only by Ease and Delight. *Love*, needs not this Fuel to maintain its Fire; it survives in Absence, and Disappointments; it endures, unchill'd, the wintry Blasts of cold Indifference and Neglect, and continues its Blaze, even in a Storm of Hatred and Ingratitude, and Reason, Pride, or a just Sensibility of conscious Worth, in vain oppose it. *Liking*, plays gayly round, feeds on the Sweets in gross, but is wholly insensible of the Thorns which guard the nicer and more refined Delicacies of Desire, and can consequently give neither Pain, nor Pleasure in any superlative Degree. *Love* creates intolerable Torments! unspeakable Joys! raises us to the highest Heaven of Happiness, or sinks us to the lowest Hell of Misery.

COUNT D'Elmont experienced the Truth of this Assertion; for neither his just Concern for the Manner of *Alovisa's* Death cou'd curb the Exuberance of his Joy, when he consider'd himself belov'd by *Melliora*, nor any Diversion of
which

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which *Rome* afforded great Variety, be able to make him support being absent from her with Moderation. There are, I believe, but few modern Lovers, how passionate and constant soever they pretend to be, who wou'd not in the Count's Circumstances have found some Matter of Consolation ; but he seem'd wholly dead to Gaiety. In vain all the *Roman* Nobility courted his Acquaintance : In vain the Ladies made use of their utmost Artifice to engage him : He preferr'd a solitary Walk, a lonely Shade, or the Bank of some purling Stream, where he undisturb'd might contemplate on his beloved *Melliora*, to all the noisy Pleasures of the Court, or the Endearments of the inviting Fair. In fine, he shun'd as much as possible all Conversation with the Men, or Correspondence with the Women ; returning all their *Billet-Deux*, of which scarce a Day past without his receiving some, unanswered.

THIS Manner of Behaviour in little Time deliver'd him from the Persecutions of the Discreet ; but having receiv'd one Letter, which he had us'd as he had done the rest, it was immediately seconded by another ; both which contain'd as follows.





LETTER I.

To the never-enough Admir'd Count
D'ELMONT.

IN your Country, where Women are allowed the Privilege of being seen and address'd to, it would be a Crime unpardonable to Modesty, to make the first Advances. But here, where rigid Rules are Bars, as well to Reason as to Nature, it would be as great a one, to feign an Insensibility of your Merit. I say, feign, for I look on it, as an Impossibility really to behold you with Indifferency: But, if I could believe that any of my Sex were in good earnest so dull, I must confess, I should envy that happy Stupidity, which would secure me from the Pains such a Passion as you create, must inflict, unless, from the Millions whom your Charms have reach'd, you have yet a Corner of your Heart unprepossess'd; and an Inclination willing to receive the Impression of,

Your most Passionate and Tender,

(but till she receive a favourable Answer)

Your unknown Adorer.

LETTER II.

To the Ungrateful D'E L M O N T.

UNworthy of the Happiness design'd you! Is it thus that you return the Condescension of a Lady? How fabulous is Report, which speaks those of your Country, warm and full of amorous Desires?—Thou sure, art colder than the bleak Northern Islanders—Dull, stupid Wretch! insensible of every Passion which gives Lustre to the Soul, and distinguishes Man from Brute!—Without Gratitude!--Without Love!--Without Desire,—Dead, even to Curiosity!--How I could despise thee for this Narrowness of Mind, were there not something in thy Eyes and Mien which assure me, that this negligent Behaviour is but affected; and that there are within thy Breast, some Seeds of hidden Fire, which want but the Influence of Charms, more potent perhaps than you have yet beheld, to kindle into Blaze. Make haste then to be enliven'd, for I flatter myself 'tis in my Power to work this Wonder, and long to inspire so lovely a Form with Sentiments only worthy of it.--The Bearer of this is a Person who I dare confide in—Delay not to come with him; for when once you are taught what it is to love, you'll not be ignorant that doubtful Expectation is the worst of Racks, and from your own Experience, pity what I feel, thus chill'd with Doubt, yet burning with Desire.

Yours impatiently.

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THE Count was pretty much surpriz'd at the odd Turn of this *Billet*; but being willing to put an End to the Lady's Trouble, as well as his own, sat down, and without giving himself much Time to think, writ these Lines in answer to hers.



To the fair INCOGNITA.

MADAM,

IF you have no other Design in writing to me, than your Diversion, methinks my Mourning Habit, to which my Countenance and Behaviour are now way unconformable, might inform you, I am little dispos'd for Raillery. If in Earnest, you can find any thing in me which pleases you, I must confess myself intirely unworthy of the Honour, not only by my personal Demerits, but by the Resolution I have made of conversing with none of your Sex while I continue in Italy. I shou'd be sorry, however, to incur the Aspersions of an unmannerly Contemner of Favours, which tho' I do not desire, I pretend not to deserve. I therefore beg you will believe that I return this, as I did the former, only to let you see, that since I decline making any use of your Condescensions to my Advantage, I am not ungenerous enough to do so to your Prejudice, and to all Ladies deserving the Regard of a disinterested Well-wisher, shall be an

Humble Servant,

D'ELMONT.

THE Count order'd one of his Servants to deliver this Letter to the Person who brought the other; but he return'd immediately with it in his Hand, and told his Lordship that he cou'd not prevail

vail on the Fellow to take it; that he said he had Business with the Count, and must needs see him; and was so importunate, that he seem'd rather to Demand, than *Entreat* a Grant of his Request. D'Elmont was astonish'd, as well he might, but commanded he should be admitted.

NOTHING cou'd be more comical than the Appearance of this Fellow; he seem'd to be about threescore Years of Age, but Time had not been the greatest Enemy to his Face; for the Number of Scars was far exceeding that of Wrinkles; he was tall above the common Stature, but so lean, that till he spoke, he might have been taken for one of those Wretches who have pass'd the Hands of the Anatomists; nor would his Walk have dissipated the Opinion; for all his Motions, as he enter'd the Chamber, had more of the Air of Clock-work, than of Nature; his Dress was no less particular, he had on a Suit of Cloaths, which might perhaps have been good in the Days of his Great-Grandfather, but the Person who they fitted must have been five times larger about the Body than him who wore them; a large broad Buff-Belt however remedy'd that Inconvenience, and girt them close about his Waist, in which hung a Faulchion, two Daggers, and a Sword of a more than ordinary Extent; the rest of his Equipage was a Cloak, which buttoning round his Neck, fell not so low as his Hips; a Hat, which in rainy Weather kept his Shoulders dry much better than an *Indian Umbrella*, one Glove, and a formidable Pair of Whiskers. As soon as he saw the Count, My Lord (said he, with a very impudent Air) my Orders were to bring yourself, not a Letter from you; nor do I use to be employ'd in Affairs of this Nature, but to serve one of the richest and most beautiful Ladies in *Rome*, who, I assure you, it will be dangerous to disoblige, D'Elmont ey'd him intently all the time he spoke, and cou'd scarce, notwithstanding his Cha-

grin, forbear laughing at the Figure he made, and the Manner of his Salutation. I know not, answer'd he, ironically, what Employments you have been us'd to, but certainly you appear to me, one of the most unfit Persons in the World for what you now undertake; and if the Contents of the Paper you brought me, had not inform'd me of your Abilities this Way, I should never have suspected you for one of *Cupid's* Agents. You are merry, my Lord. reply'd the other, but I must tell you, I am a Man of Family and Honour, and shall not put up an Affront; but, continued he, shaking the few Hairs which frequent Skirmishes had left upon his Head, I shall defer my own Satisfaction, 'till I have procur'd the Lady's; therefore, if your Lordship will prepare to follow, I shall walk before, at a perceivable Distance, and without St. *Peter's* Key, open the Gate of Heaven. I should be apt (said the Count, not able to keep his Countenance at these Words) rather to take it for the other Place; but be it as it will, I have not the least Inclination to make the Experiment, therefore you may walk as soon as you please, without expecting me to accompany you. Then you absolutely refuse to go (cry'd the Fellow, clapping his Hand on his Forehead, and staring at him, as if he meant to scare him into Compliance!) Yes (answer'd the Count, laughing more and more) I shall neither go, nor waste any farther Time or Words with you, so wou'd advise you not to be faucy, or tarry 'till my Anger gets the better of my Mirth, but take the Letter and be gone, and trouble me no more. The other, at these Words laid his Hand on his Sword, and was about to make some very impudent Reply, when *D'Elmont*, growing weary of his Impertinence, made a Sign to his Servants, that they shou'd turn him out, which he perceiving, took up the Letter without being bid a second Time, and muttering some unintelligible

Curfes

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Curfes between his Teeth, march'd out, in the fame affected Strut with which he enter'd.

THIS Adventure, tho' surprizing enough to a Person fo entirely unacquainted with the Character and Behaviour of these Bravo's as *D'Elmont* was, gave him but very little Matter of Reflection, and it being the Time for Evening Service at *St. Peter's*, he went, according to his Custom, to hear *Vespers* there.

NOTHING is more common, than for the Nobility and Gentry of *Rome*, to divert themselves with walking and talking to one another in the *Collonade* after Mass; and the Count, tho' averse to all other publick Assemblies, wou'd sometimes spend an Hour or two there.

As he was walking there this Evening, a Lady of a very gallant Mien pass'd swiftly by him, and flirting out her Handkerchief with a careless Air, as it were by chance, dropp'd an *Agnus Dei* set round with Diamonds at his Feet; he had too much Complaisance to neglect endeavouring to overtake the Lady, and prevent the Pain he imagin'd she wou'd be in, when she shou'd miss so rich a Jewel: But she, who knew well enough what she had done, left the Walk were the Company were, and cross'd over to the Fountain, which being more retir'd, was the most proper for her Design: She stood looking on the Water, in a thoughtful Posture, when the Count came up to her, and bowing with an Air, peculiar to himself, and which all his Chagrin could not deprive of an irresistible Power of Attraction, presented the *Agnus Dei* to her. I think myself, Madam, said he, highly indebted to Fortune for making me the Means of your recovering a Jewel, the Loss of which wou'd certainly have given some Disquiet: Oh! Heavens, cry'd she, receiving it with an affected Air of Surprize, could a Trifle like this, which I knew not that I had let fall, nor perhaps should have thought on more, cou'd this
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and belonging to a Woman too, meet the Regard of him, who prides in his Insensibility? Him! who has no Eyes for Beauty, nor no Heart for Love! As she spoke these Words, she contriv'd to let her Veil fall back, as if by Accident, and discover'd a Face, beautiful even to Perfection; Eyes black and sparkling, a Mouth form'd to invite, a Skin dazingly white, through which a most delightful Bloom diffus'd a chearful Warmth, and glow'd in amorous Blushes on her Cheeks. The Count could not forbear gazing on her with Admiration, and perhaps was, for a Moment, pretty near receding from that Insensibility she had reproach'd him with; but the Image of *Melliora*, yet unenjoy'd, all ravishingly sweet and tender, rose presently in his Soul, fill'd all his Faculties, and left no Passage free for rival Charms. Madam, said he, after a little Pause, the *Italian* Ladies take care to screen their too dazzling Lustre behind a Cloud, and, if I durst take that Liberty, have certainly Reason to tax your Accusation of Injustice, he, on whom the Sun has never vouchsafed to shine, ought not to be condemn'd for not acknowledging its Brightness; your's is the first Female Face I have beheld since my Arrival here, and it wou'd have been as ridiculous to have feign'd myself susceptible of Charms which I had never seen, as it would be Stupidity, not to confess those I now do, worthy Adoration. Well, resum'd she, smiling, if not the Lover's, I find you know how to act the Courtier's Part; but, continu'd she, looking languishingly on him, all you can say will scarce make me believe, that there requires not a much brighter Sun than mine, to thaw a certain frozen Resolution, you pretend to have made. There need-ed no more to confirm the Count in the Opinion he had before conceiv'd, that this was the Lady, from whom he had receiv'd the two Letters that Day, and thought he had now the fairest Opportunity in
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the World to put an End to her Passion, by assuring her how impossible it was for him even to return it, and was forming an Answer to that Purpose, when a pretty deal of Company coming toward them, she drew her Veil over her Face, and turning hastily from him, mingled with some Ladies who seem'd to be of her Acquaintance.

THE Count knew by Experience the unutterable Perturbations of Suspence, and what agonizing Tortures rend an amorous Soul, divided betwixt Hope and Fear: Despair itself is not so cruel as Uncertainty, and in all Ills, especially in those of Love, it is less Misery to know, than dread the worst. The Remembrance of what he had suffer'd, thus agitated in the Beginning of his Passion for *Melliora*, made him extremely pity the unknown Lady, and regret her sudden Departure; because it had prevented him from letting her into so much of his Circumstances, as he believ'd were necessary to induce her to recall her Heart. But when he consider'd how much he had struggled, and how far he had been from being able to repel Desire, he began to wonder that it cou'd ever enter into his Thoughts, that there was even a Possibility of *Woman*, so much stronger in her Fancy, and weaker in her Judgment, to suppress the Influence of that powerful Passion, against which, no Laws, no Rules, no Force of Reason or Philosophy are sufficient Guard.

THESE Reflections gave no small Addition to his Melancholy: *Amena's* Retirement from the World; *Alovisa's* Jealousy and Death; *Melliora's* Peace of Mind and Reputation, and the Despair of several, whom he was sensible the Love of him had render'd miserable, came fresh into his Memory, and he look'd on himself as most unhappy, in being the Occasion of making others so.

THE Night which succeeded this Day of Adventures, chancing to be abroad pretty late, as he was passing thro' a Street, he heard a Clashing of Swords; and going nearer to the Place where the Noise was, he perceiv'd, by some Lights which glimmer'd from a distant Door, a Gentleman defending himself with much Bravery against Three, who seem'd eager for his Death. *D'Elmont* was mov'd with the highest Indignation at the Sight of such Baseness; and drawing his Sword, flew furiously on the Assassins, just as one of them was about to run his Sword into the Breast of the Gentleman; who by the breaking of his own Blade, was left unarm'd. Turn, Villain, cry'd *D'Elmont*, or while you are acting that Inhumanity, receive the just Reward of it from me. The Russian fac'd about immediately, and made a Pass at him, while one of his Comrades did the same on the other side; and the third was going to execute on the Gentleman what his Fellow's Surprise had made him leave undone: But he now gain'd Time to pull a Pistol out of his Pocket, with which he shot him in a Moment dead, and snatching his Sword from him as he fell, ran to assist the Count, who 'tis likely wou'd have stood in need of it, being engag'd with two, and those the most desperate Sort of Bravo's, Villains that make a Trade of Death. But the Noise of the Pistol made them apprehensive there was a farther Rescue, and put 'em to flight. The Gentleman seem'd agitated with a more than ordinary Fury; and instead of staying to thank the Count, or enquire how he had escap'd, ran in pursuit of those who had assaulted him, so swiftly, that it was in vain for the Count, not being well acquainted with the Turnings of the Streets, to attempt to follow him, if he had a Mind to it; but seeing there was a Man kill'd, and not knowing either the Persons who fought, or the Occasion of their Quarrel, he rightly judg'd that

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that being a Stranger in the Place, his Word wou'd not be very readily taken in his own Vindication ; therefore thought his wisest Course wou'd be to make off, with what Speed he cou'd, to his Lodging. While he was considering, he saw something on the Ground which glittered extremely ; and taking it up, found that it was Part of the Sword which the assaulted Gentleman had the Misfortune to have broke : The Hilt was of a fine Piece of Agate, set round on the Top with Diamonds, which made him believe the Person whom he had preserv'd, was of considerable Quality, as well as Bravery.

HE had not gone many Paces from the Place where the Skirmish happened, before a Cry of Murder met his Ears, and a great Concourse of People, his Eyes : He had receiv'd two or three slight Wounds, which, tho' not much more than Skin deep, had made his Linnen bloody, and he knew wou'd be sufficient to make him be apprehended, if he were seen, which it was very difficult to avoid : He was in a narrow Street, which had no Turning, and the Crowd was very near him ; when, looking round him with a good deal of Vexation in his Thoughts, he discern'd a Wall which in one Part of it seem'd pretty low : He presently resolv'd to climb it, and trust to Fortune for what might befall him on the other Side, rather than stay to be expos'd to the Insults of the outrageous Mob ; who, ignorant of his Quality, and looking no farther than the Outside of Things, wou'd doubtless have consider'd him no otherwise than a Midnight Rioter.

WHEN he was got over the Wall, he found himself in a very fine Garden, adorn'd with Fountains, Statues, Groves, and every Ornament, that Art or Nature cou'd produce, for the Delight of the Owner : At the upper End there was a Summer

mer-House; into which he went, designing to stay 'till the Search was over.

BUT he had not been many Moments in his Concealment, before he saw a Door open from the House, and two Women come out; they walk'd directly up to the Place where he was; he made no doubt but that they design'd to enter, and retir'd into the farthest Corner of it: As they came pretty near, he found they were earnest in Discourse, but could understand nothing of what they said, 'till she, who seem'd to be the Chief, raising her Voice a little higher than she had done, Talk no more, *Brione*, said she; if e'er thy Eyes are blest to see this Charmer of my Soul, thou wilt cease to wonder at my Passion; great as it is, 'tis wanting of his Merit.—Oh! he is more than raptur'd Poets, feign, or Fancy can invent! Suppose him so, (cry'd the other) yet still he wants that Charm which shou'd endear the others to you—Softness: —Heavens! to return your Letters! —to insult your Messenger! to slight such Favours as any Man of Soul would die to obtain! Methinks such Usage should make him odious to you—Even I should scorn so spiritless a Wretch. Peace, thou Prophaner, said the Lady, in an angry Tone, such Blasphemy deserves a Stab. --- But thou hast never heard his Voice, nor seen his Eyes, and I forgive thee. Have you then spoke to him, interrupted the Confidant? Yes, answer'd the Lady, and by that Conversation am more undone than ever: It was to tell thee this Adventure, I came to Night into this agreeable Solitude. With these Words they came into the Summer-House, and the Lady seating herself on a Bench; Thou know'st, resum'd she, I went this Evening to St. *Peter's*; there I saw the glorious Man; saw him in all his Charms; and while I bow'd my Knee in shew to Heaven, my Soul was prostrate only to him. When the Ceremony was over, perceiving he stay'd in the Col-

lonade,

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made. I had no Power to leave it, but stood, regardless who observ'd me, gazing on him with Transports, which only those who love like me can guess!—Gods! with what an Air he walk'd! What new Attractions dwelt in every Motion!—And when he return'd, the Salutes of any that pass'd by him, how graceful was his Bow! How lofty his Mien, and yet how affable!—A sort of an inexpressible awful Grandeur, blended with tender languishments, strikes the amaz'd Beholder at once with Fear and Joy!—Something beyond Humanity shines round him! Such Looks descending Angels wear,—when sent on Heavenly Embassies to some favourite Mortal! Such is their Form! Such radiant Beams they dart; and with such Smiles they temper their Divinity with Softness—Oh! with what Pain did I restrain myself from flying to him! From rushing into his Arms! From hanging on his Neck, and wildly uttering all the furious Wishes of my burning Soul!—I trembled—rag'd with inward Agonies. Nor was all the Reason I could muster up, sufficient to tear me from his Sight, without having first spoke to him. To that end I ventur'd to pass by him, and dropt an *Agnus Dei* at his Feet, believing that wou'd give him an Occasion of following me, which he did immediately, and returning it to me, discover'd a new Hoard of unimagined charms—All my fond Soul conscious before of his Perfections, were mean to what I now beheld! Had'st thou but seen how he approach'd me—With what an awful Reverence!—With what a soft beseeching, yet commanding Air, he kiss'd the happy Trifle as he gave it me, thou wou'd'st have envy'd it as well as I! At last he spoke, and with an accent so divine, that if the sweetest Musick were compared to the more Celestial Harmony of his voice, it would only serve to prove how vastly Nature does excel all Art. But, Madam, cry'd the other,

I am

I am impatient to know the End of this Affair for I presume you discover'd to him both what and who you were? My Face only, reply'd the Lady; for e're I had Opportunity to do more, the malicious Trifler *Violetta*, perhaps envious of my Happiness, came towards us with a Croud of Impertinents at her Heels (Curse on the Interruption and broke off our Conversation, just at that blest but irrecoverable Moment, when I perceiv'd in my charming Conqueror's Eyes, a growing Tenderness, sufficient to encourage me to reveal my own. Yes, *Brione*, those lovely Eyes, while fix'd on mine, shone with a Lustre uncommon, even in themselves ——— A livelier Warmth o'erspread his Cheeks ——— Pleasure sat smiling on his Lips, those Lips, my Girl, which even when they are silent, speak; but when unclos'd, and the sweet Gales of balmy Breath blow on you, he kills you in a Sigh; each hurry'd Sense is ravish'd, and your Soul glows with Wonder and Delight. Oh! I should be forc'd to leave him in this Crisis, when new Desire began to dawn; when Love in its most lively Symptoms was apparent, and seem'd to promise all my Wishes covet, what Separation was ever so cruel? Compose yourself, dear Madam, said *Brione*; if he be really in Love, as who so sensible as not to be so, that once has seen your Charms? that *Love* will teach him speedily to find out an Opportunity as favourable as that which you have lately miss'd; or if he should want Contrivance to procure his own Happiness, 'tis but your writing to appoint a Meeting. He must — He shall be mine! cry'd the Lady in a Rapture, my Love, fierce as it was before, from Hope receives Addition to its Fury; I rave — I burn — I am mad with wild Desires — I die *Brione*, if I do not possess him. In speaking these Words, she threw herself down on a Carpet, which was spread upon the Floor, and after sighing two or three times

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continued to discover the Violence of her impatient
passion in this Manner : Oh ! that this Night, said
she, were past—the blissful Expectation of To-
morrow's Joys, and the distracting Doubts of Dis-
appointment, swell my unequal beating Heart by
torments, and rack me with Vicissitudes of Pain — I
cannot live and bear it—soon as the Morning breaks
I'll know my Doom—I'll send to him—but 'tis an
age till then—Oh ! that I could sleep—Sleep might
perhaps anticipate the Blessing, and bring him in
near to my Arms—but 'tis in vain to hope one
moment's cool Serenity, in Love like mine—My
anxious Thought hurry my Senses in eternal Watch-
ings !—Oh ! *D'Elmont ! D'Elmont !* Tranquil,
calm, and calm *D'Elmont !* little dost thou guess
the Tempest thou hast rais'd within my Soul, nor
how 'st to pity these consuming Fires !

THE Count listen'd to all this Discourse with a
world of Uneasiness and Impatience ; and tho' at
the first he fancy'd he remember'd the Voice, and
had Reason enough from the Beginning, especially
when the *Agnus Dei* was mention'd, to believe it
could be no other than himself, whom the Lady
had so passionately describ'd ; yet he had not Con-
fidence to appear till she had nam'd him ; but then,
Consideration was of Force to make him neglect
his Opportunity of undeceiving her ; his good
sense, as well as Good-nature, kept him from that
vanity too many of his Sex imitate the weaker in,
being pleas'd that it was in his Power to create
illusions, which it was not in his Power, so devoted
to her, to ease.

He stole from his Retirement as softly as he
could, because he was loth to alarm them with
any Noise, till they should discover who it was that
made it, which they might easily do, in his ad-
vancing toward them never so little : that Part of
the Bower being much lighter than that where he
stood ; but with his Over-caution in sliding his
Feet

Feet along, to prevent being heard, one of the tangled in the Corner of the Carpet, which happened not to lie very smooth, and not being sensible presently what it was that embarrass'd him, he fell with part of his Body cross the Lady, and his Head in *Brione's* Lap, who was sitting on the Ground by her. The Manner of his Fall was lucky enough, for it hinder'd either of them from rising, and running to alarm the Family, as certainly in such a Fright they would have done, his Weight had not detain'd them; they both gave a great Shriek, but the House being at a good Distance, they could not be heard: and he immediately recovering himself, begg'd Pardon for the Terror he had occasion'd them; and addressing to the Lady, who at first was dying with her Fear and now with Consternation. *D'Elmont*, Madam, said he, cou'd not have had the Assurance to appear before you, after hearing those undeserv'd Praises your Excess of Goodness has been pleas'd to bestow upon him, but that his Soul would have reproach'd him of the highest Ingratitude, in permitting you to continue longer in an Error, which may involve you in the greatest of Misfortunes; at least, I am—As he was speaking, three or four Servants with Lights came running from the House, and the Lady, though in more Confusion than can be well express'd, yet had Presence of Mind enough to bid the Count retire to the Place where he stood before, while she and *Brione* went out of the Summer-house to learn the Cause of this Interruption: Madam, cry'd one of the Servants, as soon as he saw her, the Officers of Justice are within; who being rais'd by an Alarm of Murder, come to beg your Ladyship's Permission to search your Garden, being, as they say, inform'd that the Offender made his Escape over this Wall. 'Tis very improbable, reply'd the Lady, for I have been here a considerable Time, and have neither

heard

heard the least Noise, nor seen any body ; however, they may search, and satisfy themselves — Go you and tell them so. Then turning to the Count, when she had dismiss'd her Servants ; My Lord (said she, trembling) I know not what strange Adventure brought you here To-night, or whether you are the Person for whom the Search is made ; but am sensible, if you are found here, it will be equally injurious to your Safety and my Reputation ; I have a Back-Door, thro' which you may pass in Security : But if you have Honour (continu'd she, sighing) Gratitude, or Good-nature, you will let me see you To-morrow Night. Madam (reply'd he) assure yourself that there are not many things I more earnestly desire, than an Opportunity to convince you how sensibly I am touch'd with your Favours, and how much I regret my want of Power to—You (interrupted she) can want nothing but the *Will* to make me the happiest of my Sex——But this is no Time for you to *Give* or me to *Receive* any Proofs of that Return which I expect — Once more I conjure you to be here To-morrow Night at Twelve, where the faithful *Brione* shall attend to admit you. Farewel —be punctual and sincere—'Tis all I ask——when I am not (answer'd he) may all my Hopes forsake me. By this time they were come to the Door, which *Brione* opening softly, let him out, and shut it again immediately.

THE Count took care to remark the Place, that he might know it again, resolving nothing more than to make good his Promise at the appointed Hour ; but cou'd not help being extremely troubled, when he consider'd how unwelcome his Sincerity would be, and the Confusion he must give the Lady, when, instead of those Raptures the Violence of her mistaken Passion made her hope, she shou'd meet with only cold Civility, and the killing History of the Pre-engagement of his Heart.

In

In these and the like melancholy Reflections he spent the Night, and when Morning came, receiv'd the severest Augmentation of them, which Fate cou'd load him with.

It was scarce full Day when a Servant came into his Chamber to acquaint him, that a young Gentleman, a Stranger, desir'd to be admitted, and seem'd so impatient till he was, that (said the Fellow, not knowing of what Consequence his Business may be) I thought it better to risque your Lordship's Displeasure for this early Disturbance, than by dismissing him, fill you with an unsatisfy'd Curiosity. The Count was far from being angry, and commanded that the Gentleman should be brought up; which Order being immediately obey'd, and the Servant withdrawn, out of Respect, putting his Head out of the Bed, he was surpriz'd with the Appearance of one of the most beautiful Chevaliers he had ever beheld, and in whose Face he imagin'd he trac'd some Features not unknown to him. Pardon me, Sir (said he, throwing the Curtains more back than they were before) that I receive the Honour you do me, in this Manner—but being ignorant of your Name, Quality, the Reason of your Desire to see me, or any thing but your Impatience to do so, in gratifying that, I fear, I have injur'd the Respect which I believe is due, and which, I am sure, my Heart is inclinable to pay you. Visits, like mine (reply'd the Stranger) require but little Ceremony, and I shall easily remit that Respect you talk of, while I am unknown to you, provided you will give me one Mark of it that I shall ask of you, when you do. There are very few (reply'd *D'Elmont*) that I cou'd refuse to one, whose Aspect promises to deserve so many. First then (cry'd the other, pretty warmly) I demand a Sister of you, and not only her, but a Reparation of her Honour, which can be done no otherwise than by your Blood. It

is

is impossible to represent the Count's Astonishment at these Words, but conscious of his Innocence in any such Affair, I should be sorry, Signior (said he, coolly) that Precipitation should hurry you to any Action you would afterwards repent; you must certainly be mistaken in the Person to whom you are talking — Yet, if I were rash, like you, what fatal Consequences might ensue? But there is something in your Countenance which engages me to wish a more friendly Interview than what you speak of, therefore wou'd persuade you to consider calmly, and you will soon find, and acknowledge your Mistake; and to further that Reflection, I assure you, that I am so far from conversing with any Lady in the manner you seem to hint, that I scarcely know the Name or Face of any one — Nay, more, I give you my Word, to which I join my Honour, that, as I never *have*, I never will make the least Pretensions of that kind to any Woman during the Time of my Residence here. This poor Evasion (reply'd the Stranger, with a Countenance inflam'd) ill suits a Man of Honour — This is no *Roman*, no *Italian Bona-Roba*, who I mean — but *French*, like you — like both of us — And if your Ingratitude had not made it necessary for your Peace, to erase all Memory of Monsieur Frankville, you would before now, by the near Resemblance I bear to him, have known me for his Son, and that 'tis *Melliora's* — the fond — the lost — the ruin'd *Melliora's* Cause, which calls for Vengeance from her Brother's Arm! Never was any Soul agitated with more violent Emotions, than that of Count *D'Elmont* at these Words. Doubt, Grief, Resentment, and Amazement, made such a Confusion in his Thoughts that he was unable for some Moments to answer this cruel Accusation; and when he did, The Brother of *Melliora*, said he, with a deep Sigh, would certainly have been, next to herself, the

most welcome Person upon Earth to me ; and my Joy to have embrac'd him as the dearest of my Friends, at least has equall'd the Surprize I am in, to find him, without Cause, my Enemy.—But, Sir, if such a Favour may be granted to an unwilling Foe, I would desire to know, why you join Ruin to your Sister's Name ? Oh ! give me Patience, Heaven ! (cry'd young *Frankville*, more enrag'd) is this a Question fit for you to ask, or me to answer ? Is not her Honour tainted—Fame betray'd—herself a Vagabond, and her House abus'd ; and all by you, the unfaithful Guardian of her injur'd Innocence ?—And can you ask the Cause ?——No, rather rise this Moment, and, if you are a Man, who dare maintain the Ill you have done, defend it with your Sword, not with vain Words and Womanish Excuses. All the other Passions which had warr'd within *D'Elmont's* Breast, now gave way to Indignation : Rash young Man (said he, jumping hastily out of Bed, and beginning to put his Cloaths on) your Father would not thus have us'd me, nor, did he live, could blame me for vindicating as I ought my wounded Honour—That I do love your Sister, is as true as that you have wrong'd me—basely wrong'd me. But that her Virtue suffers by that Love, is false ! and I must write the Man that speaks it, *Liar*, tho' in her Brother's Heart. Many other violent Expressions to the same Effect, pass'd between them, while the Count was dressing himself ; for he would suffer no Servant to come in, to be Witness of his Disorder. But the steady Resolution with which he had attested his Innocence, and that inexpressible Sweetness of Deportment, equally charming to both Sexes, and which, not even *Anger* could render less graceful, extremely cool'd the Heat *Frankville* had been in a little before, and he in secret began to recede very much from the ill Opinion he had conceiv'd, tho' the Greatness

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of his Spirit kept him from acknowledging he had been in an Error, till chancing to cast his Eyes on a Table which stood in the Chamber, he saw the Hilt of the broken Sword which *D'Elmont* had brought Home the Night before, lying on it; he took it up, and having first look'd on it, with some Confusion in his Countenance; My Lord (said he, turning to the Count) I conjure you, before we proceed farther, to acquaint me truly, how this came into your Possession? Tho' *D'Elmont* had as great a Courage, when any laudable Occasion appear'd to call it forth, as any Man that ever liv'd, yet his natural Disposition had such an uncommon Sweetness in it, as no Provocation could sour: It was always a much greater Pleasure to him to forgive than *punish* Injuries; and if at any time he was *angry*, he was never *rude* or *unjust*. The little Starts of Passion *Frankville's* rash Behaviour had occasion'd, all dissolv'd in his more accustomed Softness, when he perceiv'd the other growing calm. And answering to his Question with the most obliging Accent in the World: It was my good Fortune (said he) to be instrumental last Night in the Rescue of a Gentleman who appear'd to have much Bravery; and being attack'd by odds, behav'd himself in such a Manner as would have made him stand but little in need of my assistance, if his Sword had been equal to the Aim which held it; but the breaking of that gave me the Glory of not being unserviceable to him. After the Skirmish was over, I took it up, hoping it might be the Means some time or other of my discovering who the Person was who wore it; not out of Vanity of receiving Thanks for the little I have done, but that I should be glad of the friendship of a Person who seems so worthy of my Esteem. Oh! far (cry'd *Frankville*, with a tone and Gesture quite alter'd) infinitely far from — It was myself whom you preserv'd; that

very Man whose Life you last Night so generously redeem'd with the Hazard of your own, comes now prepar'd to make the first Use of it against you—Is it possible that you can be so heavenly good to pardon my wild Passion's Heat? Let this be Witness with what Joy I do, answer'd the Count, tenderly embracing him, which the other eagerly returning, they continu'd lock'd in each other's Arms for a considerable Time, neither of them being able to say more, than——And was it *Frankville* I preserv'd!——And is it to *D'Elmont* I owe my Life!

AFTER this mutual Demonstration of a perfect Reconcilement was over: See here, my Lord (said *Frankville*, giving a Paper to the Count) the Occasion of my Rashness, and let my just Concern for a Sister's Honour, be at least some little Mitigation of my Temerity, in accosting your Lordship in so rude a Manner. *D'Elmont* made no Answer, but looking hastily over the Paper, found it contain'd these Words,



TO Monsieur FRANKVILLE.

WHILE your Sister's Dishonour was known but to few, and the injurious Destroyer of it out of the Reach of your Revenge, I thought it would ill become the Friendship I have always profess'd to your Family, to disquiet you with the Knowledge of a Misfortune, which it was no more in your Power to redress.

BUT Count *D'Elmont*, having by the Solicitations of his Friends, and the Remembrance of some slight Services, obtain'd a Pardon from the King for the Murder of his Wife, has since taken but little

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Care to conceal the Reasons which induc'd him to that barbarous Action; and all Paris, is now sensible that he made that unhappy Lady's Life a Sacrifice to the more attractive Beauties of Melliora; in bloody Recompence for the Sacrifice she had before made him of her Virtue.

IN short, the Noble Family of the Frankvilles is for ever dishonour'd by this unfaithful Guardian; and all who wish you well, rejoice to hear that his ill Genius has led him to a Place, which, if he knew you were at, certainly Prudence wou'd make him of all others most avoid; for none believes you will so far degenerate from the Spirit of your Ancestors, as to let him go unpunish'd.

I N finding the Count, you may probably find your Sister too! for tho', after the Death of Alovisa, Shame made her retire to a Monastery, she has since privately left it without acquainting the Abbess, or any of the Sisterhood, with her Departure; nor is it known to any one, where, or for what Cause she absconds; but most People imagine, as indeed it is highly reasonable, that the Violence of her guilty Passion for D'Elmont has engag'd her to follow him.

I AM not insensible how much I shock your Temper by this Relation, but have too much real Concern for your Honour, to endure you shou'd, thro' Ignorance of your Wrongs, remain passive in such a Cause, and perhaps hug the treacherous Friend in your most strict Embraces? Nor can I forbear, tho' I love not Blood, urging you to take that just Revenge, which next to Heaven, you have the greatest Claim to.

I am, Sir, with all due Respect,

Yours SANSEVERIN.

THE Count swell'd with Indignation at every Paragraph of this malicious Letter; but when he came to that, which mention'd *Melliora's* having withdrawn herself from the Monastery, he seem'd to be wholly abandon'd by his Reason; all Endeavours to represent his Agonies wou'd be vain; and none but those who have felt the same can have any Notion of what he suffer'd. He read the fatal Scroll again and again, and every time grew wilder than before; he stamp'd, bit his Lips, look'd furiously about him; then starting from the Place where he had stood, measur'd the Room in strange disorder'd and unequal Paces; all his Motions, all his Looks, all his Air, were nothing but Distraction: He spoke not for some time one Word; either prevented by the rising Passions in his Soul, or because it was not in the Power of Language to express the Greatness of his Meaning; and when, at last, he open'd his Mouth, it was but to utter half Sentences, and broken Complaining: Is it possible? (he cry'd) — gone — left the Monastery unknown; — and then again — false — false — Woman! — Wretched — wretched Man! There's no such thing on Earth as Faith — Is this the Effect of all her tender Passion? — So soon forgot — what can be her Reason? — This Action suits not with her Words or Letters. In this Manner he rav'd, with a thousand such-like Breathings of a tormented Spirit, tofs'd and confounded between various Sentiments.

MONSIEUR *Frankville* stood for a good while silently observing him; and if before he were not perfectly assur'd of his Innocence, the Agonies he now saw him in, which were too natural to be suspected for counterfeit, entirely convinc'd him he was so. When the first Gust of Passion was blown over, and he perceiv'd any Likelihood of being heard, he said a thousand tender and obliging Things to persuade him to Moderation,

ration, but to very little Effect ; till finding, that that which gave him the most stinging Reflection was, the Belief that *Melliora* had forsook the Monastery, either because she thought of him no more, and was willing to divert her enfranchis'd Inclination with the Gaieties of the Town, or that some happier Man had supplanted him in her Esteem ; Judge not, my Lord (said he) so rashly of my Sister's Fidelity, nor know so little of your own unmatch'd Perfections, as to suspect that she, who is bless'd with your Affection, can consider any other Object as worthy her Regard : For my Part, since your Lordship knows, and I firmly believe, that this Letter contains a great many Untruths, I see no Reason why we should not imagine it all of a Piece : I declare I think it much more improbable that she should leave the Monastery, unless solicited thereto by you, than that she had the Power to deny you any thing your Passion might request. The Count's Disorder visibly abated at this Remonstrance ; and stepping hastily to his Cabinet, he took out the last Letter he receiv'd from *Melliora*, and found it was dated but two Days before that from Monsieur *Sanseverin* ; he knew she had not Art, nor was accustomed to endeavour to disguise her Sentiments ; and she had written so many tender Things in that, as, when he gave himself Leave to consider, he could not, without believing her to be either the most dissembling, or most fickle of her Sex, continue in the Opinion which had made him a few Moments before so uneasy, that she was no longer what she always subscrib'd herself, *Entirely His*.

THE Tempest of Rage and Grief being hush'd to a little more Tranquility, Count *D'Elmont*, to remove all Scruples which might be yet remaining in the Breast of Monsieur *Frankville*, entertain'd him with the whole History of his Adventures, from the Time of his Gallantry with *Amena*

to the Misfortunes which had induced him to travel, disguising nothing of the Truth, but some Part of the Discourses which had pass'd between him and *Melliora* that Night when he surpriz'd her in her Bed, and in the WilderNESS: For tho' he freely confess'd the Violence of his own unbounded Passion, had hurry'd him beyond all Considerations but those of gratifying it; yet he was too tender of *Melliora's* Honour, to relate any thing of her, which her Modesty might not acknowledge, without the Expence of a Blush.

FRANKVILLE listened with abundance of Attention to the Relation he made him, and could find very little in his Conduct to accuse: He was himself too much susceptible of the Power of Love not to have Compassion for those that suffer'd by it, and had too great a Share of good Sense not to know that that Passion is not to be circumscrib'd; and being not only, not *Subservient* to, but absolutely *Comptroller* of the *Will*, it would be mere Madness, as well as ill Nature, to say a Person was blame-worthy for what was unavoidable.

WHEN Love once becomes in our Power, it ceases to be worthy of that Name; no Man really possess'd with it, can be Master of his Actions; and whatever Effects it may enforce, are no more to be condemn'd, than Poverty, Sicknefs, Deformity, or any other Misfortune incident to human Nature. Methinks there is nothing more absurd than the Notions of some People, who in other Things are wise enough too; but wanting Elegance of Thought, Delicacy, or Tenderness of Soul, to receive the Impression of that harmonious Passion, look on those to be mad, who have any Sentiments elevated above their own, and either censure, or laugh at what they are not refined enough to comprehend. These *Inspids*, who know nothing of the Matter, tell us very gravely, that we ought to love with Moderation and Discretion,

tion,—and take care that it is for our Interest — that we should never place our Affections, but where Duty leads, or at least, where neither Religion, Reputation, or Law, may be a Hindrance to our Wishes.—Wretches! We know all this as well as they; we know too, that we both do and leave undone many other Things, which we ought not; but Perfection is not to be expected on this Side the Grave: And since it is impossible for Humanity to avoid Frailties of some kind or other, those are certainly least blameable, which spring only from a too great Affluence of the nobler Spirits. *Covetousness, Envy, Pride, Revenge*, are the Effects of an earthly, base, and sordid Nature; *Ambition*, and *Love*, of an exalted one; and if they are Failings, they are such as plead their own Excuse, and can never want Forgiveness from a generous Heart, provided no indirect Courses are taken to procure the Ends of the former, nor Inconstancy or Ingratitude, stain the Beauty of the latter.

NOTWITHSTANDING, all that Monsieur Frankville could say, the Count, though not in that Rage of Temper he had been in, was yet very melancholly; which the other perceiving, Alas! my Lord (said he sighing) if you were sensible of the Misfortunes of others, you wou'd think your own more easy to be borne: You love, and are belov'd; no Obstacle remains between you and your Desires, but the Formality of Custom, which a little time will remove, and at your Return to Paris you will doubtless be happy, if 'tis in my Sister's Power to make you so: You have a sure Prospect of Felicity to come; but mine is *past*, never, I fear, to be retriev'd. What mean you? cry'd the Count, pretty much surpriz'd at his Words and the Change which he observ'd in his Countenance; I am in Love! (reply'd he) belov'd! Nay, have enjoy'd—Ay, there's the Source of my De-

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spair—I know the Heaven I have lost, and that's my Hell.—The Interest *D'Elmont* had in his Concerns, as being Son to the Man whom he had loved with a kind of filial Affection, and Brother to the Woman whom he had ador'd above the World, made him extremely desirous to know what the Occasion of this Disquiet was, and having exprest himself to that Purpose; I shall make no Difficulty, reply'd *Frankville*, to reveal the Secret of my Love, to him who is a Lover, and knows so well, how to pity, and forgive, the Errors which that Passion will sometimes lead us into. The Count was too impatient to hear the Relation he was about to give him, to make any other Answer to these Words than with a half Smile; which the other perceiving, without any farther Prelude, began to satisfy his Curiosity in this manner.



THE
HISTORY
OF

Monsr. FRANKVILLE.

YOU know, my Lord, (said he) that I was bred at *Rheims* with my Uncle, the Bishop of that Place, and continued with him, till after, prompted by Glory, and Hope of that Renown you have since so gallantly acquir'd, you left

left the Pleasures of the Court for the Fatigues and Dangers of the Field : When I came home, I never ceas'd soliciting my Father to permit me to travel, 'till weary'd with my continual Importunities, and, perhaps, not much displeas'd with my Thirst af Improvement, he at last gave Leave. I left *Paris* a little before the Conclusion of the Peace, and by that Means remain'd wholly a Stranger to your Lordship's Person, tho' perfectly acquainted with those admirable Accomplishments which Fame is every where so full of.

I HAVE been in the Courts of *England*, *Spain*, and *Portugal*, but nothing very material happ'ning to me in any of those Places, it would be rather impertinent, than diverting, to defer, for Trifles, the main Business of my Life, that of my Love, which had not a Being till I came into this City.

I HAD been here but a little Time before I had a great many Acquaintance ; among the Number of them was Signior *Jaques Honorius Cittolini* : He, of all the rest, I was most intimate with ; and though to the Generality of People he behav'd himself with an Air of Imperiousness, he was to me all free and easy ; he seem'd as if he took a Pleasure in obliging me ; carry'd me every where with him ; introduc'd me to the best Company : When I was absent, he spoke of me, as of a Person who he had the highest Esteem for ; and when I was present, if there were any in Company whose Rank oblig'd him to place them above me in the Room, he took care to testify that I was not below them in his *Respect* ; in fine, he was never more happy than when he was giving me some Proof how much he was my Friend ; and I was not a little satisfy'd that a Man of almost twice my Years should believe me qualify'd for his Compani-
on in such a manner as he made me.

WHEN the melancholy Account of my Father's Death came to my Ears, he omitted nothing

to persuade me to sell my Estate in *France*, and settle in *Rome*; he told me he had a Daughter whose Heart had been the Aim of the chiefest Nobility; but that he wou'd buy my Company at that Price, and to keep me here, wou'd give me her. This Proposition was not altogether so pleasing to me, as perhaps, he imagin'd it would be: I had heard much talk of this Lady's Beauty, but I had never seen her; and at that Time, Love was little in my Thoughts, especially that sort which was to end in Marriage: However, I wou'd not absolutely refuse his Offer, but evaded it; which I had the better Pretence for, because *Violetta*, (so was his Daughter call'd) was gone to *Viterbo* to visit a sick Relation, and I cou'd not have the Opportunity of seeing her. In the mean time, he made me acquainted with his deepest Secrets: Among many other Things he told me, that tho' their Family was one of the greatest in *Rome*; yet by the too great Liberality of his Father, himself and one Sister were left with very little to support the Grandeur of their Birth; but that his Sister who was acknowledg'd a Woman of an uncommon Beauty, had the good Fortune to appear so to Signior *Marcarius Fialasco*. He was the Possessor of immense Riches, but very old; but the young Lady found Charms enough in his Wealth to ballance all other Deficiencies; she married, and buried him in a Month's time, and he dy'd so full of Fondness to his lovely Bride, that he left her Mistress of all he had in the World; giving only to a Daughter he had by a former Wife, the Fortune which her Mother had brought him, and that too, and herself to be dispos'd of, in Marriage, as this triumphant Widow should think fit; and she, like a kind Sister, thought none worthy of that Alliance, but her Brother; and in a few Days he said, he did not doubt but that I shou'd see him a Bridegroom. I ask'd him if he was happy

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happy enough to have made an Interest in the young Lady's Heart! and he very frankly answered, That he was not of a Humour to give himself much Uneasiness about it, since it was wholly in his Sister's Power to make him Master of her Person, and she resolv'd to do that, or confine her in a Monastery for ever. I cou'd not help feeling a compassionate Concern for this Lady, tho' she was a Stranger to me, for I cou'd not believe, so beautiful and accomplish'd a Woman, as he had often describ'd her to be, cou'd find any thing in her design'd Husband which cou'd make this Match agreeable. Nothing can be more different from graceful, than the Person of *Cittolini*; he is of a black swarthy Complexion, hook't-Nos'd, wall-Ey'd, short of Stature; and tho' he is very lean, the worst-shap'd Man I ever saw; then for his Temper, as friendly as he behav'd to me, I discern'd a great deal of Treachery, and Baseness in it to others; a perpetual Peevishness and Pride appear'd in his Deportment to all those who had any Dependance on him: And I had been told by some who knew him perfectly well, that his cruel Usage of his first Lady had been the Means of her Death; but this was none of my Business, and tho' I pity'd the Lady, yet my Gratitude to him engag'd me to wish him Success in all his Undertakings. 'Till one Day, unluckily both for him and me, as it has since prov'd, he desir'd me to accompany him to the House of *Ciamara*, for so is his Sister call'd, being willing, I suppose, that I should be a Witness of the extraordinary State she liv'd in; and indeed, in all the Courts I had been at, I never saw any thing more magnificent than her Apartments; the vast Quantity of Plate, the Richness of the Furniture, and the Number of Servants attending on her, might have made her to be taken for a Princess, rather than a private Woman. There was a very noble
Col-

Collation, and she sat at Table with us herself, a particular Favour from an *Italian* Lady: She is by many Years younger than her Brother, and extremely handsome; but has, I know not what, of Fierceness in her Eyes, which renders her, at least to me, a Beauty without a Charm. After the Entertainment, *Cittolini* took me into the Gardens, which were answerable to what I had seen within, full of Curiosities; at one End there was a little Building of Marble, to which he led me, and entring into it, See here, *Monsieur* (said he) the Place where my Sister spends the greatest Part of her Hours, and tell me if 'tis in this kind of Diversion that the *French* Ladies take Delight. I presently saw it was full of Books, and guess'd those Words were design'd as a Satire on our Ladies, whose Disposition to Gallantry seldom affords much time for Reading. But to make as good a Defence for their Honour as I was able; *Signior*, reply'd I, it must be confess'd, that there are very few Ladies of any Nation, who think the Acquisition of Knowledge worth the Pains it must cost in the Search; but that ours is not without some Examples, that all are not of that Mind, our famous *D'Annois* and *D'Acier*, may evince. Well, well, interrupted he, laughing, the Propensity which that Sex bears to Learning is so trifling, that I shall not pretend to hold any Argument on its Praise; nor did I bring you here so much to engage you to admire my Sister's Manner of Amusement, as to give you an Opportunity of diverting yourself, while I go to pay a Compliment to my Mistress, who, tho' I have a very great Confidence in you, I dare not trust with the Sight of so accomplish'd a *Chevalier*. With these Words he left me; and I, designing to do as he had desir'd, turn'd to the Shelves to take down what Book I cou'd find most suitable to my Humour; but, good God! as I was tumbling them over, I

saw

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saw through a Window which look'd into a Garden behind the Study, tho' both belonging to one Person, a Woman, or rather an Angel, coming down a Walk directly opposite to where I was: Never did I see in one Person such various Perfections blended; never did any Woman wear so much of her Soul in her Eyes, as did this Charmer: I saw that Moment in her Looks all I have since experienc'd of her Genius, and her Humour; Wit, Judgment, Good-nature, and Generosity are in her Countenance conspicuous as in her Actions; but to go about to make a Description, were to wrong her. She has Graces so peculiar, that none without knowing her can be able to conceive; and tho' nothing can be finer than her Shape, or more regular than her Features; yet those our Fancy or a *Painter's* Art may copy: There is something so inexpressibly striking in her Air; such a delightful Mixture of awful and attractive in every little Motion, that no Imagination can come up to. But if Language is too poor to paint her Charms, how shall I make you sensible of the Effects of them on me! The Surprize—the Love—the Adoration which this fatal View involv'd me in, but by that which you say yourself felt at the first Sight of *Melliora*. I was, methought, all Spirit,—I beheld her with Raptures, such as we imagine Souls enjoy, when, freed from Earth, they meet each other in the Realms of Glory; 'twas Heaven to gaze upon her: But, oh! the Bliss was short, the envious Trees obscur'd her Lustre from me.—The Moment I lost Sight of her, I found my *Passion* by my *Pain*; the *Joy* was vanish'd, but the *Sting* remain'd—I was so bury'd in Thought, that I never so much as stirr'd a Step to endeavour to discover which way she went; tho' if I had consider'd the Situation of the Place, it would have been easy for me to have known there was a Communication between the two Gardens, and if I had
gone

gone but a few Paces out of the Study, must have met her; but Love for the present depriv'd me of my Senses; and it was but just enter'd into my Head, that there was a Possibility of renewing my Happiness, when I perceiv'd *Cittolini* returning. When he came pretty near, Dear *Frankville* (said he) pardon my Neglect of you; but I have been at *Camilla's* Apartment, and am told she is in the lower Garden; I will but speak to her, snatch a Kiss, and be with you again. He went hastily by me, without staying for any Answer, and it was well he did do, for the Confusion I was in, had made me little able to reply. His Words left me no room to hope it was any other than *Camilla* I had seen, and the Treachery I was guilty of to my Friend, in but wishing to invade his Right, gave me a Remorse which I had never known before: But these Reflections lasted not long; Love generally exerts himself on these Occasions, and is never at a Loss for Means to remove all the Scruples that may be rais'd to oppose him. Why, said I to myself, should I be thus tormented? She is not yet married, and 'tis almost impossible she can with Satisfaction, ever yield to be so to him. Could I but have Opportunity to talk to her, to let her know my Passion, — to endeavour to deliver her from the Captivity she is in, perhaps she would not condemn my Temerity: I found a great deal of Pleasure in this Thought, but I was not suffer'd to enjoy it long; Honour suggested to me, that *Cittolini* lov'd me, had oblig'd me, and to supplant him would be base and treacherous: But would it not be more so, cry'd the Dictates of my Love, to permit the Divine *Camilla* to fall a Sacrifice to one so every way undeserving of her; one who 'tis likely she abhors; one who despises her Heart, so he may but possess her Fortune to support his Pride, and her Person to gratify a Passion far unworthy of the Name

of

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of Love; one! who 'tis probable, when Master of the one, and satiated with the other, may treat her with the utmost Inhumanity? Thus, for a time were my Thoughts at Strife; but Love at length got the Victory, and I had so well compos'd myself before *Cittolini's* Return, that he saw nothing of the Disorder I had been in: But it was not so with him, his Countenance, at the best, displeasing enough, was now the perfect Representative of Ill-nature, Malice and Discontent. *Camilla* had assur'd him, that nothing could be more her Aversion, and that she was resolv'd, though a Monastick Life was what she had no Inclination to, yet she would fly to that Shelter, to avoid his Bed. You may imagine, my Lord, I was transported with an Excess of Joy, when he told me this; but Love taught me to dissemble it, 'till I had taken leave of him, which I made an Excuse to do as soon as possible.

Now all that troubled me was to find an Opportunity to declare my Passion; and I confess, I was so dull in Contrivance, that tho' it took up all my Thoughts, none of them were to any Purpose: Three or four Days I spent in fruitless Projections, the last of which I met with a new Embarrassment; *Cittolini's* Daughter was return'd, he renew'd his Desires of making me his Son, and invited me the next Evening to his House, where I was to be entertain'd with the Sight of her; I could not well avoid giving him my Promise to be there, but resolv'd in my Mind to behave myself in such a manner as should make her disapprove of me. While I was thus busied in contriving how to avoid *Violetta*, and engage *Camilla*, a Woman wrapt up very closely in her Veil came to my Lodgings, and brought me a Note, in which I found these Words.

To



TO Monsieur FRANKVILLE.

M*Y Father is resolv'd to make me Yours; and if he has your Consent, mine will not be demand-
ed; he has commanded me to receive you to-
morrow, but I have a particular Reason to desire to
see you sooner; I am to pass this Night with Camilla
at my Aunt Ciamara's; there is a little Wicket
that opens from the Garden, directly opposite to the
Convent of St. Francis: if you will favour me so
far as to come there at ten a Clock to Night, and
give seven gentle Knocks at the Gate, you shall know
the Cause of my entreating this private Interview,
which is of more Moment than the Life of,*

VIOLETTA.

NEVER had I been more pleasingly surpriz'd,
than at the reading of these Lines; I could not
imagine the Lady could have any other Reason for
seeing me in private, than to confess that her Heart
was pre-engag'd, and dissuade me from taking the
Advantage of her Father's Authority; a secret
Hope too, sprung within my Soul, that my adora-
ble *Camilla* might be with her; and after I had
dismiss'd the Woman, with an Assurance that I
would attend her Lady, I spent my Time in vast
Ideas of approaching Happiness, 'till the appointed
Hour arriv'd.

BUT how great was my Disappointment, when
being admitted, I could distinguish, tho' the Place
was very dark, that I was receiv'd but by one, and
accosted by her in a manner very different from
what I expected: I know not, Monsieur, said she,
how you interpret this Freedom I have taken; but
whatever

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whatever we pretend, our Sex, of all Indignities, can the least support those done to our Beauty: I am not vain enough of mine, to assure my self of making a Conquest of your Heart; and if the World should know you have *seen* and *refus'd* me, my slighted Charms would be the Theme of *Mirth* to those whose *Envy* now they are: I therefore beg, that if I am dislik'd, none but my self may know it; when you have seen my Face, which you shall do immediately, give me your Opinion freely; and if it is not to my Advantage, make some pretence to my Father to avoid coming to our House. I protest to you, my Lord, that I was so surpriz'd at this odd kind of Proceeding, that I knew not presently how to reply; which she imagining by my Silence, Come, come, Monsieur, said she, I am not yet on even Terms with you, having often seen *your* Face, and you wholly a Stranger to *mine*: But when our Knowledge of each other is mutual, I hope you will be as free in your Declaration as I have been in my Request. These Words I thought were as proper for my Purpose as I cou'd wish; and drawing back a little, as she was about to lead me, Madam, said I, since you have that Advantage, methinks it were but just you should reveal what sort of Sentiments the Sight of me has inspir'd, for I have too much Reason, from the Knowledge of my Demerit, to fear you have no other Design in exposing your Charms, than to triumph in the captivating a Heart you have already doom'd to Misery. I will tell you nothing, answer'd she, of *my* Sentiments 'till I have a perfect Knowledge of *yours*. As she spoke this, she gave me her Hand to conduct me out of that Place of Darkneps. As we went, I had all the Concern at the Apprehension of being too much approv'd of by this young Lady, as I should have had for the contrary, if I had imagin'd who it was I had been talking with; for as soon as we came

came out of the Grotto, I saw by the Light of the Moon, which shone that Night with an uncommon Lustre, the Face which in those Gardens had before charm'd me, and which had never since been absent from my Thoughts. What Joy, What a Mixture of Extacy and Wonder, then fill'd my raptur'd Soul at this second View; I could not presently trust my Eyes, or think my Happiness was real: I gaz'd, and gaz'd again, in silent Transport; for the big Bliss surpass'd the reach of Words. What, Monsieur, said she, observing my Confusion, are you yet dumb! Is there any thing so dreadful in the Form of *Violetta*, to deprive you of your Speech? No, Madam, reply'd I, 'tis not *Violetta* has that Power, but she who unknowing that she did so, caught at first Sight the Victory o'er my Soul; She! for whom I have vented so many Sighs! She! whom I languish'd and almost dy'd for, while *Violetta* was at *Viterbo*! She! The divine *Camilla*, only cou'd inspire a Passion such as mine! ——— Oh! Heavens! cry'd she (and that Instant I perceiv'd her lovely Face all crimson'd o'er with Blushes) is it then possible that you know me, have seen me before, and that I have been able to make any Impression on you? I then told her of the Visit I had made to *Ciamara* with *Cittolini*, and how by his leaving me in the Marble Study I had been blest with the Sight of her; and from his Friend became his Rival: I let her know the Conflicts my Honour and my Obligations to *Cittolini* had engag'd me in; the thousand various Inventions Love had suggested to me, to obtain that Happiness I now enjoy'd, the Opportunity of declaring my self her Slave; and in short, conceal'd not the least Thought, tending to my Passion, from her. She, in Requital, acquainted me that she had often seen me from her Window, go into the Convent of St. *Francis*, walking in the Collo-

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made at *St. Peter's*, and in several other Places, and prompted by an Extravagance of Good-nature and Generosity, confess'd, that her Heart felt something at those Views, very prejudicial to her Repose; that *Cittolini*, always disagreeable, was now grown odious; that the Discourse she had heard of my intended Marriage with his Daughter had given her an Alarm impossible to be express'd; and that, unable longer to support the Pangs of undiscover'd Passion, she had writ to me in that Lady's Name, who she knew I had never seen, resolving, if I lik'd her as *Violetta*, to own herself as *Camilla*; if not, to go the next Day to a Monastery, and devote to Heaven those Charms which wanted Force to make a Conquest, where alone she wish'd they should.

I MUST leave it to your Lordship's Imagination to conceive the wild tumultuous Hurry of disorder'd Joy, which fill'd my ravish'd Soul at this Condescension; for I am now as unable to describe it, as I was then to thank the dear, the tender Author of it; but what *Words* had not Power to do, *Looks* and *Actions* testified: I threw myself at her Feet, embrac'd her Knees, and kiss'd the Hand she rais'd me with, with such a Fervor, as no false Love cou'd feign; while she, all Softness, all divinely kind, yielded to the Pressure of my glowing Lips, and suffer'd me to take all the Freedom which Honour and Modesty wou'd permit. This Interview was too felicitous to be easily broken off, it was almost broad Day when we parted, and nothing but her Promise, that I shou'd be admitted the next Night, cou'd have enabled me to take leave of her.

I WENT away highly satisfy'd, as I had good Reason, with my Condition, and after recollecting all the tender Passages of our Conversation, I began to consider after what Manner I shou'd proceed with *Cittolini*: To visit and address his Daughter,

Daughter, I thought, wou'd be treacherous and deceitful to the last Degree; and how to come off after the Promise I made of seeing her that Evening, I cou'd not tell: at last, since Necessity oblig'd me to one, I resolv'd of the two Evils to chuse the least, and rather to seem *rude* then *base*, which I must have been, had I by counterfeiting a Desire to engage *Violetta*, left room for a Possibility of creating one in her. I therefore writ to *Cittolini* an Excuse for not waiting on him and his Daughter, as I had promis'd, telling him that I, on more serious Reflection found it wholly inconsistent, either with my Circumstances, or Inclinations, to think of passing all my Life in *Rome*; that I thank'd him for the Honour he intended me, but that it was my Misfortune, not to be capable of accepting it. Thus, with all the Artifice I was Master of, I endeavour'd to sweeten the bitter Pill of Refusal: But in vain; for he was so much disgusted at it, that he visited me no more: I cannot say, I had Gratitude enough to be much concern'd at being compell'd to use him in this Fashion! for, since I had beheld and ador'd *Camilla*, I cou'd consider him no longer as a Friend, but as the most dangerous Enemy to my Hopes and me. All this time I spent the best part of the Nights wth *Camilla*, and in one of them, after giving, and receiving a thousand Vows of everlasting Faith, I snatch'd a lucky Moment, and obtain'd from the dear melting Charmer, all that my fondest, and most eager Wishes cou'd aspire to. Yes, my Lord, the soft, the trembling Fair, dissolv'd in Love, yielded without Reserve, and met my Transports with an equal Ardour; and I truly protest to your Lordship, that what in others *palls* Desire, added fresh Force to mine; the more I knew, the more I was inflam'd; and in the highest Raptures of Enjoyment the Bliss was dash'd with Fears; which prov'd, alas! but too prophetick, that some curst
Chance

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Chance might drive me from my Heaven: Therefore to secure it mine for ever, I press'd the lovely Partner of my Joys, to give me leave to bring a Priest with me the next Night; who, by giving a Sanction to our Love, might put it past the Power of Malice to disunite us. Here I experienced the Greatness of her Soul, and her almost unexampled Generosity; for in spite of all her Love, her Tenderness, and the unbounded Condescensions she had made me, it was with all the Difficulty in the World, that I perswaded her to think of marrying me without a Fortune, which by her Father's *Will* was wholly in the Disposal of *Ciamara*, who it wou'd have been Madness to hope, wou'd ever bestow'd it upon me. However, my Arguments at last prevail'd; I was to bring a Friar, of the Order of *St. Francis*, who was my intimate Friend, the next Night to join our Hands; which done, she told me, she would advise me to leave *Rome* with what Speed we cou'd, for she doubted not but *Cittolini* wou'd make use of any Means, tho' never so base or bloody, to revenge his Disappointment. This Proposal infinitely pleas'd me; and after I had taken leave of her, I spent the Remainder of the Night in contriving the Means of our Escape. Early in the Morning I secur'd Post-horses, and then went to the Convent of *St. Francis*; a Purse of *Louis d'Ors* soon engag'd the Friar to my Interest, and I had every thing in wonderful Order, considering the Shortness of the Time, for our Design: When returning Home towards Evening, as well to take a little Rest after the Fatigue I had had, as to give some other necessary Directions concerning the Affair to my Servants, one of them gave me a Letter which had been just left for me.

MONSIEUR *Frankville* cou'd not come to this Part of his Story without some Sighs; but suppressing them as well as he was able, he took some Papers out of his Pocket, and singling out one, read to the Count as follows:

To



TO Monsieur FRANKVILLE.

WITH what Words can I represent the Greatness of my Misfortune, or exclaim against the Perfidy of my Woman! I was oblig'd to make her the Confidant of my Passion; because without her Assistance I cou'd not have enjoy'd the Happiness of your Conversation, and 'tis by her that I am now betray'd—undone—lost to all Hopes of ever seeing you more.—What have I not endur'd this Day, from the Upbraidings of Ciamara and Cittolini! but that I shou'd despise, nay, my own Ruin too, if you were safe—But oh! their Malice aims to wound me most through you—Bravo's are hired, the Price of your Blood is paid, and they have sworn to take your Life—Guard it, I conjure you, if you wou'd preserve that of Camilla's. Attempt not to come near this House, nor walk alone, when Night may be an Umbrage to their Designs—I hear my cruel Enemies returning to renew their Persecutions; and I have Time to inform no more, than that 'tis to the generous Violetta you are indebted for this Caution: She, in pity of my Agonies, and to prevent her Father from executing the Crime he intends, conveys this to you; slight it not, if you wou'd have me believe you love

CAMILLA.

WHAT a Turn was here (continu'd he, sadly) in my Fortune! How on a sudden was my Scene of Happiness chang'd to the blackest Despair!—But not to tire your Lordship, and spin out my Narration, which is already too long, with unavailing

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ing Complainings. I every Day expected a Challenge from *Cittolini*, believing he would, at least, take that Method at first; but it seems he was for chusing the *surest*, not the *fairest* Way: And I have since prov'd, that my dear *Camilla* had too much Reason for the Caution she gave me. Ten Days I linger'd out, without being able to invent any Means, either to see her or write to her; at the End of which I receiv'd another Letter from her, which, if I were to tell you the Substance of, would be to wrong her, since no Words but her own, are fit to express her Meaning, and 'tis for that Reason only I shall read it.

To Monsieur FRANKVILLE.

OF all the Woes which wait on human Life, sure there is none equal to that a Lover feels in Absence; 'tis a kind of Hell, an Earnest of those Pains, we are told, shall be the Portion of the Damn'd. Ten whole Nights and Days, according to the vulgar Reckoning; but in mine, as many Ages have roll'd their tedious Hours away since last I saw you; in all which time my Eyes have never known one Moment's Cessation from my Tears, nor my sad Heart from Anguish; restless I wander thro' this hated House---Kiss the clos'd Wicket--Stop and look at every Place which I remember your dear Steps have blest; then, with wild Rawings, think of past Joys, and curse my present Woes---Yet you perhaps are calm, no sympathizing Pangs invade your Soul, and tell you what mine suffers; else you would, you must have found some Means to ease yourself and me---'tis true I bid you not attempt it---But oh! if you had lov'd like me,

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you could not have obeyed—Desire has no regard to Prudence, it despises Danger, and over-looks Impossibilities—But whither am I going? I say I know not what—Oh, mark not what Distraction utters! Shun those detested Walls! 'tis Reason now commands! fly from this House, where injured Love's enslaved, and Death and Treachery reign—I charge thee come not near, nor prove thy Faith so hazardous a Way—Forgive the little Fears, which ever dwell with Love—I know thou art all Sincerity!—all God-like Truth, and can'st not change—yet, if thou should'st,—tormenting Thought! why then, there's not a Heaven-abandon'd Wretch, so lost—so curst as I—What shall I do to shake off Apprehension? In spite of all thy Vows—thy ardent Vows, when I but think of any Maid, by Love and fond Belief undone, a deadly Cold runs thro' my Veins, congeals my Blood, and chills my very Soul! Gazing on the Moon last Night her Lustre brought fresh to my Memory, those transporting Moments, when by that Light I saw you first a Lover, and, I think, inspir'd me, who am not usually fond of versifying, to make her this Complaint.





The Unfortunate CAMILLA's Complaint
to the Moon, for the Absence of her
dear HENRICUS FRANKVILLE.

MILD Queen of Shades ! thou sweetly shining
Light !

Once, more than Phœbus, welcome to my
Sight :

'Twas by thy Beams I first Henricus saw
Adorn'd with Softness, and disarm'd of Awe !
Never didst thou appear more fair ! more bright !
Than on that dear, that Cause-remembred Night !
When the dull Ties of Friendship he disclaim'd,
And to inspire a tend'rer Passion aim'd :

Alas ! he cou'd not long, in vain, implore,
For that, which tho' unknown, was his before ;
Nor had I Heart the Secret to disguise,
My Soul spoke all her Meaning thro' my Eyes, }
And every Glance brighten'd with glad Surprise !
Lost to all Thought, but his supporting Charms,
I sunk, unguarded ! melting in his Arms !

Blest at that lavish Rate, my State that Hour
I did not have chang'd for all in Fortune's Power ;
Nay, had descending Angels from on High
Spread their bright Wings to waft me to the Sky,
Thus clasp'd ! Cælestial Charms had fail'd to move,
And Heaven been slighted for Henricus Love.

How did I then thy happy Influence bless ?
How watch each joyful Night, thy Lights increase ?
Oh ! how alter'd since — Despairing now,
I view thy Lustre with contracted Brow ;

196 LOVE in EXCESS: or,

*Penſive and ſullen from the Rays wou'd hide,
And ſcarce the glimmering Stars my Griefs abide;
In Death-like Darkneſs wou'd my Fate deplore,
And wiſh thee to go down, to riſe no more.*

PITY the Extravagance of a Paſſion, which only Charms like thine could create; nor too ſeverely chide this ſoft Impertinence, which I could not refrain ſending you: When I can neither ſee you, nor hear from you, to write gives ſome little Reſpite to my Pains, becauſe I am ſure of being in your Thoughts while you are reading my Letters. The tender-hearted Violetta, preferring the Ties of Friendſhip to thoſe of Duty, gives me this happy Opportunity; but my ill Fortune deprives me too of her, ſhe goes To-morrow to her Father's Villa, and Heaven knows when I ſhall find Means to ſend to you again.

FAREWELL, thou lovelieſt, deareſt, and divinely Charmer — Think of me with a Concern full of Tenderneſs, but that is not enough; and you muſt pardon me when I confeſs, that I cannot forbear wiſhing you might feel ſome of thoſe Pains impatient Longing brings. — All others be far away, as far as Joy is, when you are abſent from

Your unfortunate

CAMILLA

P. S. Since I writ this, a Fancy came into my Head, that if you could find a Friend truſty enough to confide in, and one unknown to our Family, he might gain Admittance to me in Cittolini's Name as ſent by him, while he is at the Villa. I flatter myſelf you will take as much Pleaſure in endeavouring to let me hear from you, as I do in the Hope of it. Once more.

Adieu.

You

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YOUR Lordship may judge, by what I have told you of the Sincerity of my Passion, how glad I should have been to have comply'd with her Request, but it was utterly impossible to find any body fit for such a Business: I pass'd three or four Days more in Disquietudes too great to be express'd; I saunter'd up and down the Street where she liv'd, in hopes to see her at some of the Windows; but Fortune never was so favourable to me: Thus I spent my Days, and lost the Sight of those dear Walls at Nights, but in Obedience to the Charge she had given me of preserving my Life.

THUS, my Lord, has the Business of my Love engrossed my Hours. ever since your Lordship's Arrival; and tho' I heard that you were here, and extremely wish'd to kiss your Hands, yet I could never get one Moment compos'd enough to wait on you in, till what my Desires could not do, the Rashness of my Indignation effected: Last Night being at my Banker's where all my Bills and Letters are directed, I found this from Monsieur *Sanseverin*; the Rage which the Contents of it put me in, kept me from remembering that Circumspection which *Camilla* had enjoin'd; and I thought of nothing but revenging the Injury I imagin'd you had done me: As I was coming home, I was attack'd as you saw, when you so generously preserv'd me; the just Indignation I conceiv'd at this base Proceeding of *Cittolini's*, transported me so far, as to make me forget what I owed to my Deliverer, to run in Pursuit of those who assaulted me; but soon lost Sight of them, and returning, as Gratitude and Honour call'd me, to seek and thank you for your timely Assistance, I found a Throng of People about the Body of the Villain I had kill'd; some of them were for examining me, but finding no Wounds about me, nor any Marks of the Engagement I had been in, I was left at my Liberty.

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THUS, my Lord, have I given you, in as brief a Manner as the Changes of my Fortune would permit, the Account of my present melancholy Circumstances, in which, you find many things blameable ; you must acknowledge there are more which require Compassion.

I SEE no Reason (answer'd the Count) either for the one or the other ; you have done nothing but what any Man who is a Lover, wou'd gladly have it in his Power to do ; and as for your Condition, it certainly is more to be envied than pitied : The Lady loves, is constant, and doubtless will some way or other, find means for her Escape — Impossible ! (cry'd *Frankville*, interrupting him) she is too strictly watch'd to suffer such a Hope. If you will prepare a Letter (resum'd *D'Elmont*) myself will undertake to be the Bearer of it ; I am intirely a Stranger to the People you have been speaking of, or if I should chance to be known to them, cannot be suspected to come from you, since our Intimacy, so lately born, cannot yet be talk'd of, to the Prejudice of our Design, and how do you know (continued he smiling) but, if I have the good Fortune to be introduc'd to this Lady, that I shall not be able to assist her Invention to form some Scheme, for both your future Happiness ? This Offer was too agreeable to be refus'd ; *Frankville* accepted it with all the Demonstrations of Gratitude and Joy imaginable, and setting himself down to the Count's Scrutore, was not long writing the following *Billet*, which he gave him to read before he seal'd it.

To



To the most Lovely and Adorable
C A M I L L A.

IF to consume with inward Burnings, to have no Breath but Sighs, to wish for Death, or Madness to relieve me from the Racks of Thought, be Misery consummate, such is mine! And yet my too unjust Camilla thinks I feel no Pain, and chides my cold Tranquility! could I be so, I were indeed a Wretch deserving of my Fate, but far unworthy of your Pity, or Regard. No, no, thou loveliest, softest, most angelick Creature, that Heaven, in lavish Bounty, ever sent to charm the Adoring World; he that could know one Moment's stupid Calm in such an Absence, ought never to be blest with those unbounded Joys thy Presence brings: What would I not give, what would I not hazard, but once more to behold thee, to gaze upon thy Eyes, those Suns of kindling Transports! to touch thy enlivening Hand! to feed upon the ravishing Sweetness of thy Lips! Oh, the Imagination's Extasy! Life were too poor to set on such a Cast; and you should long ere this have prov'd the little Value I have for it, in Competition with my Love, if your Commands had not restrain'd me. Cittolini's Malice, however, had last Night been gratify'd if the Noble Count D'Elmont had not been inspir'd for my Preservation; it is to him I am indebted, not only for my Life, but a much greater Favour, that of conveying to you the Assurance, how much my Life, my Soul, and all the Faculties of it are entirely Yours. Thank him, my Camilla, for your Frankville, for Words like thine are only fit to praise, as it deserves, such an exalted Generosity; 'tis with an infinite deal

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of Satisfaction I reflect how much thy Charms will justify my Conduct when he sees thee, all that Excess of Passion which my fond Soul's too full of to conceal; that Height of Adoration, which offered to any other Woman, would be Sacrilege, the Wonders of thy Beauty and thy Wit, claim as their Due, and prove Camilla, like Heaven, can never be too much revered! be too much lov'd! — But oh! how poor is Language to express what 'tis I think, thus raptur'd with thy Idea, thou best, thou brightest—thou most perfect—thou something more than Excellence itself—thou far surpassing all that Words can speak, or Heart, unknowing thee, conceive: Yet I could dwell for ever on the Theme, and swell whole Volumes with enervate, tho' well-meaning Praises; if my Impatience to have what I have already writ be with you, did not prevent my saying any more than that but in you I live, nor cou'd support this Death-like Absence, but for some little Intervals of Hope, which sometimes flatter me, that Fortune will grow weary of persecuting me, and one Day re-unite my Body to my Soul, and make both inseparably yours,

FRANKVILLE.

THESE new-made Friends having a Fellow-feeling of each other's Sufferings, as proceeding from one Source, pass'd the time in little else but amorous Discourses, till it was a proper Hour for the Count to perform his Promise; and taking a full Direction from Frankville how to find the House, he left him at his Lodgings to wait his Return from Ciamara's; forming, all the Way he went, a thousand Projects to communicate to Camilla for her Escape; he was still extremely uneasy in his Mind concerning Melliora, and long'd to be in Paris to know the Truth of that Affair, but thought he could not in Honour leave her Brother in this Embarrassment, and resolv'd to make

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make use of all his Wit and Address to persuade *Camilla* to hazard every thing for Love; and was not a little pleas'd with the Imagination, that he should lay so considerable an Obligation on *Meliora*, as this Service to her Brother would be. Full of these Reflections he found himself in the *Portico* of that magnificent House he was to enter, and seeing a Crowd of Servants about the Door, desir'd to be brought to the Presence of Donna *Camilla Fiasco*; one of them immediately conducted him into a stately Room, and leaving him there, told him the Lady should be made acquainted with his Request; presently after came in a Woman, who, though very young, seem'd to be in the Nature of a *Duenna*: The Count stood with his Back toward her as she enter'd, but hearing somebody behind him, and turning hastily about, he observ'd she startled at Sight of him, and appear'd so confus'd, that he knew not what to make of her Behaviour; and when he ask'd if he might speak with *Camilla*, and said he had a Message to deliver from *Cittolina*, she made no other Answer, than several times, with an amaz'd Accent, echoing the Names of *Camilla* and *Cittolini*, as if not able to comprehend his Meaning; he was oblig'd to repeat his Words over and over before she could recollect herself enough to tell him, that she would let him know her Lady's Pleasure instantly. She left him in a good deal of Consternation, at the Surprise he perceiv'd the Sight of him had put her into, he form'd a thousand uncertain Guesses, what the Occasion should be; but the Mystery was too deep for all his Penetration to fathom, and he waited with abundance of Impatience for her Return, or the Appearance of her Lady, either of which, he hop'd, might give a Solution to this seeming Riddle.

HE attended a considerable Time, and was beginning to grow excessive uneasy at this Delay, when a magnificent *Anti-porta* being drawn up, he saw through a Glass Door, which open'd into a Gallery, the *Duenna* approaching: She had now entirely compos'd her Countenance, and with an obliging Smile told him, she would conduct him to her Lady. She led him through several Rooms, all richly furnish'd and adorn'd, but far inferior to the last he came into, and in which he was again left alone, after being assured that he should not long be so.

COUNT *D'Elmont* could not forbear giving truce to his more serious Reflections, to admire the Beauties of the Place he was in; wherever he turn'd his Eyes he saw nothing but what was splendidly luxurious, and all the Ornaments contriv'd in such a Manner, as might fitly be a Pattern to paint the Palace of the Queen of Love by: The Ceiling was vastly high, and beautify'd with most curious Paintings; the Walls were cover'd with Tapestry, in which, most artificially were woven, in various-colour'd Silk, intermix'd with Gold and Silver, a great Number of amorous Stories; in one Place he beheld a naked *Venus* sporting with *Adonis*; in another, the Love-transform'd *Jupiter*, just resuming his Shape, and rushing to the Arms of *Leda*; there the seeming chaste *Diana* embracing her entranc'd *Endymion*; here the God of soft Desires himself wounded with an Arrow of his own, and snatching Kisses from the no less enamour'd *Psyche*: Betwixt every one of these Pieces hung a large Looking-Glass, which reach'd to the Top of the Room; and out of each sprung several crystal Branches, containing great Wax Tapers, so that the Number of Lights vy'd with the Sun, and made another and more glorious Day, than that which lately was withdrawn. At the upper End of this magnificent Chamber there was a Canopy

nopy of Crimson Velvet, richly emboss'd, and trim'd with Silver, the Corners of which were supported by two golden *Cupids*, with stretch'd-out Wings, as if prepar'd to fly; two of their Hands grasp'd the Extremity of the *Valen*, and the other, those nearest to each other, join'd to hold a Wreath of Flowers, over a Couch which stood under the Canopy. But tho' the Count was very much taken at first with what he saw, yet he was too sincere a Lover to be long delighted with any thing in the Absence of his Mistress: How heavenly (said he to himself, sighing) wou'd be this Place if I expected *Melliora* here! But oh! how preferable were a Cottage, blest with her, to all this Pomp and Grandeur with any other. This Consideration threw him into a deep Musing, which made him forget either where he was, or the Business which brought him there, till rous'd from it by the dazzling Owner of this sumptuous Apartment. Nothing could be more glorious than her Appearance; she was by Nature a Woman of a most excellent Shape, to which her Desire of pleasing had made her add all the Aids of Art! She was dress'd in a Gold and Silver Stuff Petticoat, and a Waistcoat of plain blue Sattin, set round the Neck and Sleeves, and down the Seams with Diamonds, and fasten'd on the Breast with Jewels of a prodigious Largeness and Lustre; a Girdle of the same encompass'd her Waist; her Hair, of which she had great Quantity, was black as Jet, and, with a studied Negligence, fell part of it on her Neck in careless Ringlets, and the other was turn'd up, and fasten'd here and there with Bodkins, which had pendant Diamonds hanging to them, and as she mov'd, glitter'd with a quivering Blaze, like Stars darting their Fires from out a sable Sky; she had a Veil on, but so thin, that it did not, in the least, obscure the Shine of her Garments, or her Jewels; only she had contriv'd to double that Part of it

which hung over her Face, in so many Folds, that it serv'd to conceal her as well as a Vizard Mask.

THE Count made no doubt but this was the Lady for whom he waited; and throwing off that melancholy Air he had been in, assum'd one all gay and easy; and bowing low as he advanc'd to meet her; Madam (said he) if you are that incomparable *Camilla*, whose Goodness nothing but her Beauty can equalize, you will forgive the Intrusion of a Stranger, who confesses himself no other Way worthy of the Honour of your Conversation, but by his Desires to serve him who is much more so. A Friend of *Cittolini's* (answer'd she) can never want Admittance here; and if you had no other Plea, the Name you come in is a sufficient Warrant for your kind Reception. I hope (resum'd he, in a low Voice, and looking round to see if there were no Attendants in hearing) I bring a better from *Frankville*! Madam, the adorable *Frankville*! I have these Credentials to justify my Visit. In speaking this, he delivered the Letter to her, which she retiring a few Paces from him to read, gave him an Opportunity of admiring the Majesty of her Walk, and the agreeable Loftiness of her Mien, much more than he had time to do before.

SHE dwelt not long on the Contents of the Letter; but throwing it carelessly down on a Table which stood near her, turn'd to the Count, and with an Accent which express'd not much Satisfaction: And was it to you, my Lord (said she) that Monsieur *Frankville* ow'd his Preservation? I was so happy (reply'd he) to have some little Hand in it; but since I have known how dear he is to you, think myself doubly blest by Fortune for the Means of acting any thing conducive to your Peace. If you imagine that this is so (resum'd she

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she hastily) you are extremely mistaken, as you will always be, when you believe, when Count *D'Elmont* appears, any other Man seems worthy the Regard of a discerning Woman; but (contin'd she, perceiving he look'd surpriz'd) to spare your Suspence, and myself the Trouble of repeating what you know already, behold who she is, you have been talking to, and tell me now, if *Frankville* has any Interest in a Heart to which this Face belongs? With these Words she threw off her Veil, and instead of lessening his Amazement, very much increas'd it, in discovering the Features of the Lady with whom he had discoursed the Night before in the Garden; he knew not what to think, or how to reconcile to Reason, that *Camilla*, who so lately lov'd, and had granted the highest Favours to *Frankville*, should on a sudden be willing, uncorrupted, to bestow them on another; nor could he comprehend how the same Person should at once live in two several Places, for he conceiv'd the House he was in, was far distant from the Garden which he had been in the Night before.

THEY both remain'd for some Moments in a profound Silence, the Lady expecting when the Count should speak, and he endeavouring to recollect himself enough to do so; till she, at last, possibly guessing at his Thoughts, resum'd her Discourse in this Manner: My Lord (said she) wonder not at the Power of Love, a Form like yours might soften the most rugged Heart, much more one, by Nature so tender as is mine.—— Think but what you are (contin'd she, sighing, and making him sit down by her on the Couch) and you will easily excuse whatever my Passion may enforce me to commit. I must confess, Madam, answer'd he very gravely, I never in my Life wanted Presence of Mind, so much as at this Juncture

Juncture, to see before me here, the Person, who I believ'd, liv'd far from hence, who, by Appointment, I was to wait on this Night at a different place.—To find in the Mistress of my Friend, the very Lady, who seems unworthily to have bestow'd her Heart on me, are Circumstances so incoherent, as I can neither account for, or make evident to *Reason*, tho' they are too truly so to *Sense*. It will be easy (reply'd she) to reconcile both these seeming Contradictions, when you shall know that the Gardens belonging to the House are of a very large Extent, and not only that, but the Turning of the Streets are so order'd, as make the Distance between the fore and back Door appear much greater than really it is: And for the other, as I have already told you, you ought to be better acquainted with yourself, than to be surpriz'd at Consequences which must infallibly attend such Charms: In saying this, she turn'd her Head a little on one Side, and put her Handkerchief before her Face, affecting to seem confus'd at what she spoke; but the Count redned in good Earnest, and with a Countenance which express'd Sentiments far different from those she endeavour'd to inspire: Madam, said he, tho' the good Opinion you have of me is owing intirely to the *Error* of your *Fancy*, which too often, especially in your Sex, blinds the *Judgment*, yet, 'tis certain, that there are not many Men, whom such Praises, coming from a Mouth like yours, wou'd not make Happy and Vain; but if I was ever of a Humour to be so, it is now wholly mortify'd in me; and 'tis but with the utmost Regret, that I must receive the Favours you confer on me to the Prejudice of my Friend: And is that (interrupted she hastily) is that the *only* Cause? Does nothing but your Friendship to *Frankville* prevent my Wishes? That, of itself, answer'd he, were a sufficient Bar to sunder us for ever; but there's another,

ther, if not a greater, a more tender one, which to restore you to the Path, which Honour, Gratitude, and Reason call you to, I must inform you of; yes, I must tell you, Madam, all lovely as you are, that were there no such Man as *Frankville* in the World, — were you as free as Air, I have a Defence within, which all your Charms can never pierce, nor Softness melt — I am already bound, not with the weak Ties of Vows or formal Obligations, which confine no farther than the Body, but Inclination ! — the fondest Inclination ! that ever swell'd a *Heart* with rapturous Hopes. The Lady had much ado to contain herself till he had done speaking; she was by Nature extremely haughty, insolent of her Beauty, and impatient of any thing she thought look'd like a Slight of it; and this open Defiance of her Power, and acknowledging *another's*, had she been less in Love, would have been insupportable to her: Ungrateful and uncourtly Man (said she) looking on him with Eyes that sparkled at once with Indignation and Desire, you might have spar'd yourself the Trouble of repeating, and me the Confusion of hearing, in what manner you stand engag'd; it had been enough to have told me you never could be mine, without appearing transported at the Ruin which you make: If my too happy Rival possesses Charms I cannot boast, methinks your *good Manners* might have taught you, not to insult my Wants, and your *good Nature*, to have mingled *Pity* with your *Justice*: With these Words she fell a weeping, but whether they were Tears of Love or Anger, is hard to determine; 'tis certain, that both those Passions rag'd this Moment in her Soul with equal Violence, and if she had had it in her Power, would doubtless have been glad to have hated him, but he was at all times too lovely to suffer a Possibility of that, and much more so at this; for in Spight of the Shock,

that

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that Infidelity he believ'd her guilty of to *Frankville*, gave him, he was by Nature so compassionate, he *felt* the Woes he *saw*, or heard of, even of those who were most indifferent to him, and could not now behold a Face, in which all the Horrors of Despair were in the most lively manner represented, without displaying a Tenderness in his, which in any other Man, might have been taken for Love; the dazzling Radiance of his Eyes, gave place to a more dangerous, more bewitching Softness; and when he sigh'd, in pity of her Anguish, a Soul-inchanting Languishment diffus'd itself thro' all his Air, and added to his Graces: She presently perceiv'd it, and forming new Hopes, as well from that, as from his Silence, took hold of his Hand, and pressing it eagerly to her Bosom; Oh, my Lord (resum'd she), you cannot be ungrateful if you would—— I see you cannot—Madam (interrupted he, shaking off as much as possible that Shew of Tenderness) which he found had given her Encouragement; I wish not to convince you how nearly I am touch'd with what you suffer, least it should *increase* an Esteem which, since prejudicial to your Repose, and the Interest of my Friend, I rather ought to endeavour to *lessen*—— But, as this is not the Entertainment I expected from *Camilla*, I beg to know an Answer of the Business I came upon, and what you decree for the unfortunate *Frankville*? If the Lady was agitated with an Extremity of Vexation at the Count's Declaration of his Passion for another, what was she now, at this Disappointment of the Hopes she was so lately flatter'd with! Instead of making any direct Reply to what he said, she rag'd, stamp'd, tore her Hair, curs'd *Frankville*, all Mankind, the World, and in that Height of Fury, scarce spar'd Heaven itself; but the Violence of her Pride and Resentment being a little vented, Love took his Turn, again she

wept,

wept, again she prest his Hand, nay, she even knelt and hung upon his Feet, as he would have broke from her, and begg'd him with Words as eloquent as Wit could form, and desperate dying Love suggest, to pity and relieve her Misery : But he had now learn'd to dissemble his Concern, lest it should a second time beguile her, and after raising her, with as careless and unmov'd an Air, as he was capable of putting on : My Presence, Madam (said he) but augments your Disorder, and 'tis only by seeing you no more, that I am qualify'd to conduce to the Recovery of your Peace : With these Words he turn'd hastily from her, and was going out of the Room, when she, quick as Thought, sprung from the Place where she had stood, and being got between him and the Door, and throwing herself into his Arms, before he had time to prevent her : You must not, shall not go, she cry'd, till you have left me dead : Pardon me, Madam, answer'd he fretfully, and struggling to get loose from her Embrace ; to stay after the Discovery you have made of your Sentiments, were to be guilty of an Injustice almost equal to yours ; therefore I beg you'd give me Liberty to pass.——Hear me but speak, resum'd she, grasping him yet harder ; return but for a Moment,——lovely Barbarian !——Hell has no Torments like your Cruelty. Here the different Passions working in her Soul, with such uncommon Vehemence, hurry'd her Spirits beyond what Nature could support ; her Voice falter'd in the Accent, her trembling Hands by slow Degrees relinquish'd what so eagerly they had held ; every Sense forgot its Use, and she sunk, in all appearance, lifeless on the Floor : The Count was, if possible, more glad to be releas'd than griev'd at the Occasion, and contented himself with calling her Women to her Assistance, without staying to see when she would recover.

HE

HE went out of that House with Thoughts much more discompos'd than those with which he had enter'd it; and when he came Home (where *Frankville* impatiently waited his Return) he was at the greatest Loss in the World, how to discover his Misfortune to him. The other observing the Trouble of his Mind, which was very visible in his Countenance; My Lord, said he, in a melancholy Tone, I need not ask you what Success; the Gloom which appears on your Brow, tells me, my ill Fortune has deny'd you the Means of speaking to *Camilla*: Accuse not Fortune, answer'd *D'Elmont*, but the Influence of malicious Stars, which seldom, if ever, suit our Dispositions to our Circumstances; I have seen *Camilla*, have talk'd to her, and 'tis from that Discourse that I cannot forbear Reflection on the Miseries of Humanity, which while it mocks us with a Shew of *Reason*, gives us no Power to curb our *Will*, and guide the erring Appetites to Peace. Monsieur *Frankville* at these Words first felt a jealous Pang; and as 'tis natural to believe every Body admires what we do, he presently imagin'd Count *D'Elmont* had forgot *Melliora* in the Presence of *Camilla*, and that it was from the Consciousness of his own Weakness and Inconstancy, that he spoke so feelingly: I wonder not, my Lord, said he coldly, that the Beauties of *Camilla* should inspire you with Sentiments, which, perhaps for many Reasons, you would desire to be free from; and I ought, in Prudence, to have consider'd that tho' you are the most excellent of your Kind, you are still a *Man*, and have the Passions incident to *Man*, and not have expos'd you to those Dangers the Sight of *Camilla* must necessarily involve you in. I wish to Heaven, answer'd the Count, easily guessing what his Thoughts were, no greater threatned you, and that you could think on *Camilla* with the same Indifference as

I can,

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I can, or she of me with more. Then, in as brief a Manner as he could, he gave him the Substance of what had happen'd. *Frankville*, whose only Fault was Rashness, grew almost wild at the Recital of so unexpected a Misfortune; he knew not for a good while what to believe: Loth he was to suspect the Count, but lother to suspect *Camilla*, yet flew into Extremeties of Rage against both, by Turns: The Count pitied, and forgave all the Violence of his Passion made him utter, but offer'd not to argue with him, till he found him capable of admitting his Reasons, and then, that open Sincerity, that honest noble Assurance which always accompany'd his Sweetness, and made it difficult to doubt the Truth of any thing he said, won the disorder'd Lover to an intire Conviction; he now concludes his Mistress false, repents the Tenderness he has had for her, and tho' she still appears as lovely to his *Fancy* as ever, she grows odious to his *Judgment*, and resolves to use his utmost Efforts to banish her Idea from his Heart.

In this Humour he took leave of the Count, it growing late, and his last Night's Adventures taught him the Danger of nocturnal Walks; but how he spent his time till Morning, those can only guess, who have loved like him, and like him, met so cruel a Disappointment.

THE Count pass'd not the Night in much less Inquietude than *Frankville*; he griev'd the powerful Influence of his own Attractions; and had there not been a *Melliora* in the World, he would have wish'd himself deform'd, rather than have been the Cause of so much Misery, as his Loveliness produc'd.

THE next Morning the Count design'd to visit *Frankville*, to strengthen him in his Resolution of abandoning all Thoughts of the unconstant *Camilla*; but before he could get drest, the other came into his Chamber; My Lord (said he)

as

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as soon as they were alone, my perfidious Mistress, failing to make a Conquest of your Heart, is still willing to preserve that she had attain'd over mine; but all her Charms and her Delusions are but vain; and to prove to your Lordship that they are so, I have brought the Letter I receiv'd from her scarce an Hour past, and the true Copy of my Answer to it.



To Monsieur FRANKVILLE.

THO' nothing proves the Value of your Presence, so much as the Pangs your Absence occasions, and in my last I rashly wish'd you might be sensible of mine; yet, on examining my Heart, I presently recall'd the hasty Prayer, and found I lov'd with that Extravagance of Tenderneſs, that I had rather you return'd it too little than too much; and methinks could better bear to represent you to my Fancy, careless and calm, as common Lovers are, than think I saw you burning,—bleeding,—dying, like me, with hopeleſs Wiſhes, and unavailing Expectations; but, ah! I fear ſuch Apprehenſions are but too unneceſſary— You think not of me; and if in thoſe happy Days, when no croſs Accident interven'd to part me from your Sight, my Fondneſs pleas'd, you now find nothing in Camilla worth a troubled Thought, nor breathe one tender Sigh in Memory of our Transports paſt.— If I wrong your Love, impute it to Diſtraction; for, oh! 'tis ſure, I am not in my Senſes, nor know to form one regular Deſire: I act, and ſpeak, and think a thouſand incoherent Things; and tho' I cannot forbear writing to you, I write in ſuch a manner, ſo wild, ſo different from what I would, that I repent me of
the

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the Folly I am guilty of, even while I am committing it; but to make as good a Defence as I am able for those, perhaps, unwelcome Lines, I must inform you, that they come not so much to let you know my Sentiments, as to engage a Discovery of yours: Ciamara has discharg'd one of her Servants from her Attendance, who no longer courting her Favour or regarding her Frowns, I have prevail'd upon, not only to bring this to you, but to convey an Answer back to me, by the Help of a String which I am to let down from my Window; therefore, if you are but as kind as he has promis'd to be faithful, we may often enjoy the Blessing of this distant Conversation: Heaven only knows when we shall be permitted to enjoy a nearer. Cittolini is this Evening return'd from his Villa, and nothing but a Miracle can save me from the Necessity of making my Choice of him, or a Monastery, either of which is worse than Death, since it must leave me the Power to wish, but take away the Means, of being what I so oft have sworn to be,

Eternally Yours, and,

Yours alone,

CAMILLA.

THE Count could not forbear lifting up his Eyes and Hands in token of Amazement, at the unexampled Falshood this Woman appeared guilty of; but perceiving Monsieur Frankville was about to read the following Answer, would not interrupt him, by asking any Questions, till he had done.



TO DONNA CAMILLA.

IF Vows are any Constraint to an Inclination so addicted to Liberty as yours, I shall make no Difficulty to release you of all you ever made to me! Yes, Madam, you are free to dispose both of your Heart and Person wheresoever you think fit; nor do I desire you should give yourself the Pains of further Dissimulation. I pay too entire an Obedience to your Will, to continue in a Passion which is no longer pleasing: Nor will, by an ill-tim'd and unmannerly Constancy, disturb the Serenity of your future Enjoyments with any happier Man than,

FRANKVILLE.

You see, my Lord (said he with a Sigh) that I have put it out of her Power to triumph over my Weakness, for I confess my Heart still wears her Chains; but ere my Eyes or Tongue betray to her the shameful Bondage, these Hands should tear them out; therefore I made no mention of her Behaviour to you, nor of my sending any Letter by you, not only because I knew not if your Lordship would think it proper, but lest she should imagine my Resentment proceeded from Jealousy, and that I lov'd her still——No, she shall never have Cause to guess the Truth of what I suffer—Her *real* *Perfidy* shall be repaid with *seeming* *Inconstancy* and Scorn.—Oh! how 'twill sting her Pride!—By Heaven, I feel a gloomy kind of Pleasure in the Thought, and will indulge it, even to the highest Insults of Revenge.

I RATHER

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I RATHER wish, reply'd the Count, you could in earnest be indifferent, than only feign to be so; her unexampled Levity and Deceit, render her as unworthy of your Anger as your Love, and there is too much Danger while you preserve the *one*, that you will not be able to throw off the *other*. —

Oh! I pretend not to it, cry'd *Frankville*, interrupting him, she has too deep a Root within my Soul ever to be remov'd — I boast no more than a Concealment of my Passion; and when I dress the Horrors of a bleeding, breaking Heart, in all the Calm of cold Tranquility, methinks, you should applaud the noble Conquest. Time (said the Count, after a little Pause) and a just Reflection how little she deserves your Thoughts, will teach you to obtain a nobler; that of numbering your Love, among things that *were*, but *are* no more, and make you, with me, acknowledge that 'tis as great an Argument of *Folly* and *Meanness of Spirit*, to continue the same Esteem, when the Object ceases to deserve, which we profess'd before the Discovery of that Unworthiness, as it would be of *Villainy* and *Inconstancy of Mind*, to change, without an efficient Cause. A great deal of Discourse pass'd between them to the same Effect, and it was but in vain that Count *D'Elmont* endeavour'd to persuade him to a real Forgetfulness of the Charmer, tho' he resolv'd to seem as if he did so.

WHILE they were disputing, one of *D'Elmont's* Servants gave him a Letter, which he told him the Person who brought it, desir'd he would answer immediately: He no sooner broke it open, and cast his Eye over it, then he cry'd out in a kind of Transport, Oh! *Frankville*, what has Fate been doing! You are happy—*Camilla* is innocent, and perhaps the most deserving of her Sex; I only am guilty, who, by a fatal Mistake have wrong'd her Virtue, and tormented

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mented you; but read (continu'd he, giving him the Letter) read, and satisfy yourself.

MONSIEUR *Frankville* was too much astonish'd at these Words, to be able to make any Reply, but immediately found the Interpretation of them in these Lines.



To the dear cruel Destroyer of my
Quiet, the never too much Admir'd
Count D'ELMONT.

TIS no longer the Mistress of your Friend, a perfect and unjust Camilla, who languishes and dies by your Contempt, but one, whom all the Darts of Love had strove in vain to reach, till from your Charms they gain'd a God-like Influence, and un-erring Force! One who, tho' a Widow, brings you the Offering of a Virgin Heart.

AS I was sitting in my Closet, watching the Progress of the lazy Hours, which flew not half so swift as my Desires to bring on the appointed Time, in which you promis'd to be with me in the Garden, my Woman came running in to acquaint me, that you were in the House, and waited to speak with Camilla. Surprise and Jealousy at once assaulted me, and I sunk beneath the Apprehension that you might, by some Accident have seen her, and also lov'd her: To ease myself of those tormenting Doubts, I resolv'd to appear before you in her stead, and kept my Veil over my Face till I found that hers was unknown to you. — You are not ignorant what follow'd: The Deceit pass'd upon you for Truth, but I was sufficiently punish'd for it, by the Severity of your Usage: I was just going to discover myself who I was, when the
Violence

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Violence of my Love, my Grief, and my Despair, threw me into that Swoon, in which, to compleat your Cruelty, you left me; 'twould be endless to endeavour to represent the Agonies of my Soul when I recover'd and heard you were gone; but all who truly love, as they fear much, so they hope much, my Tortures at length abated, at least, permitted me to take some Intervals of Comfort, and I began to flatter myself, that the Passion you seem'd transported with, for a nameless Mistress was but a Feint to bring me back to him you thought I was oblig'd to love, and that there was a Possibility that my Person and Fortune might not appear despicable to you, when you shou'd know I have no Ties but those of Inclination, which can be only yours while I am,

CIAMARA.

P. S. If you found nothing in me worthy of your Love, my Sufferings are such, as justly may deserve your Pity; either relieve or put an End to them, I conjure you—Free me from the lingring Death of Doubt; at once decree my Fate; for, like a God, you rule my very Will; nor dare I, without your Leave, throw off this wretched Being: Oh! then permit me once more to behold you, to try at least to warm you into Kindness with my Sighs, to melt you with my Tears,—to sooth you into Softness by a thousand yet undiscover'd Fondnesses—and, if all fail, to die before your Eyes.

THOSE who have experienc'd the Force of Love, need not to be inform'd what Joy, what Transport, swell'd the Heart of Monsieur Frankville, at this unexpected *Eclaircissement* of his dear Camilla's Innocence; when every thing concurs to make our Woes seem real, when Hopes are dead, and even Desire is hush'd by the loud Clamours of Rage and Despair; then——then to

L

be

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be recall'd to Life, to Light, to Heaven and Love again, in such a Torrent of o'erpowering Happiness,—such a Surcharge of Extacy, as Sense can hardly bear.

WHAT now wou'd *Frankville* not have given that it had been in his Power to have recall'd the last Letter he sent to *Camilla*? His Soul severely reproach'd him for so easily believing she cou'd be false; though his Experience of the Sweetness of her Disposition, made him not doubt of a Pardon from her, when she shou'd come to know what had been the Reason of his Jealousy; his Impatience to see her, immediately put it into his Head, that as *Ciamara* had been the Occasion of the Misunderstanding between them, *Ciamara* might likewise be made the Property to set all right again; to this End, he entreated the Count to write an Answer of Compliance, and a Promise to come to her the next Day, in which Visit, he wou'd, in a Disguise, attend him; and being once got into the House, he thought it wou'd be no Difficulty to steal to *Camilla's* Apartment.

BUT he found it not so easy a Task as he imagin'd, to persuade Count *D'Elmont* to come into this Design; his generous Heart, averse to all Deceit, thought it base and unmanly to abuse with Dissimulation the real Tendernefs this Lady had for him; and though press'd by the Brother of *Melliora*, and conjur'd to it, even by the Love he profess'd for her, it was with all the Reluctance in the World that he at last consented; and his Servant came several Times into the Room to remind him that the Person who brought the Letter waited impatiently for an Answer, before he cou'd bring himself into a Humour to write in the Manner Monsieur *Frankville* desir'd; and though scarce any Man ever had so sparkling a Fancy, such a Readiness of Thought, or Aptitude of Expression,

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pression, when the Dictates of his Soul were the Employment of his Tongue or Pen, yet he now found himself at a loss for Words, and he wasted more Time on these few Lines, than a Thousand times as many on any other Subject would have cost him.



To the Beautiful and Obliging
CIAMARA.

If I did not sin against Truth when I assur'd you that I had a Mistress to whom I was engag'd by Inclination, I certainly did, when I appear'd guilty of a Harshness which was never in my Nature. The Justice you do me in believing the Interest of my Friend was the greatest Motive for my seeming Unkindness, I have not the Power sufficiently to acknowledge; but, cou'd you look into my Soul, you wou'd there find the Effects of your Inspiration, something so tender, and so grateful, as only Favours, such as you confer, cou'd merit or create.

I design to make myself happy in waiting on you to-morrow Night about Eleven, if you will order me Admittance at that Back-gate, which was the Place of our first Appointment; 'till then, I am the lovely Ciamara's;

Most Devoted Servant,

D'ELMONT.

P. S. There are some Reasons why I think it not safe to come alone, therefore beg you'll permit me to bring a Servant with me, on whose Secrecy I dare rely.

WHEN the Count had sent away this little Billet, Monsieur *Frankville* grew very gay on the Hopes of his Design succeeding; and laughing, My Lord (said he) I question whether *Melliora* would forgive me, for engaging you in this Affair; *Ciamara* is extremely handsome, has Wit, and where she attempts to charm, has doubtless a thousand Artifices to obtain her Wish. The Count was not in a Temper to relish his Raillery; he had a great deal of Compassion for *Ciamara*, and thought himself inexcuseable for deceiving her; and all that *Frankville* cou'd do to dissipate the Gloom that Reflection spread about him, was but vain.

THEY spent the greatest Part of this Day together, as they had done the former; and when the Time came that *Frankville* thought it proper to take Leave, it was with a much more chearful Heart than he had the Night before; but his Happiness was not yet secure, and in a few Hours he found a considerable Alteration in his Condition.

As soon as it was dark enough for *Camilla* to let down her String to the Fellow whom she had order'd to wait for it, he receiv'd another Letter fasten'd to it; and finding it was directed as the other, for Monsieur *Frankville*, he immediately brought it to him.

It was with a Mixture of Fear and Joy that the impatient Lover broke it open; but both these Passions gave Place to an adequate Despair, when having unseal'd it, he read these Lines.



To Monsieur FRANKVILLE.

I Have been already so much deceiv'd that I ought not to boast of any Skill in the Art of Divination; yet, I fancy, 'tis in my Power to form a juster Guess than I have done, what the Sentiments of your Heart will be when you first open this—Methinks I see you put on a scornful Smile, resolving to remain unmow'd either at Upbraidings or Complaints; for to do one of these, I am satisfied, you imagine is the Reason of my troubling you with a Letter: But, Sir, I am not altogether silly enough to believe the tenderest Supplications the most humble of my Sex cou'd make, have Efficacy to restore Desire, once dead, to Life; or if it cou'd, I am not so mean-spirited as to accept a Return thus caus'd; nor wou'd it be less impertinent to reproach. To tell you, that you are perjur'd--base--ungrateful, is what you know already, unless your Memory is so complaisant as not to remind you of either Vows or Obligations: But to assure you, that I reflect on this sudden Change of your Humour without being fir'd with Rage, or stupify'd with Grief, is, perhaps, what you least expect.—Yet, strange as it may seem, it is most certain, that she, whom you have found the softest, fondest, tenderest of her Kind, is in a Moment grown the most indifferent; for in spight of your Inconstancy, I never shall deny that I have lov'd you—Lov'd you, even to Dotage: My Passion took birth long before I knew ou had a Thought of feigning one for me, which frees me from that Imputation Women too frequently deserve, of loving for no other Reason than because they are beloved; for if you ne'er had seem'd to love, I should

have continued so in Reality. I found a thousand Charms in your Person and Conversation, and believ'd your Soul no less transcending all others in excellent Qualities, than I still confess your Form to be in Beauty; I dress you up in vain Imagination, adorn'd with all the Ornaments of Truth, Honour, good Nature, Generosity, and every Grace that raises mortal Perfection to the highest Pitch, and almost reach Divinity—but you have taken care to prove yourself meer Man, to like, dislike, and wish you know not what nor why! If I never had any Merits, how came you to think me worthy the Pains you have taken to engage me! And if I had, how am I so suddenly depriv'd of them?—No, I am still the same, and the only Reason I appear not so to you, is, that you behold me now no more with Lover's Eyes; the few Charms I am Mistress of, look'd lovely at a Distance, but lose their Lustre when approach'd too near; your Fancy threw a glittering Burnish o'er me, which free Possession has worn off, and now the Woman only stands expos'd to View; and I confess I justly suffer for the guilty Folly of believing, that in your Sex Ardors could survive Enjoyment, or if they could, that such a Miracle was reserv'd for me: but, thank Heaven, my Punishment is past, the Pangs, the Tortures of my bleeding Heart, in tearing your Idea thence, already are no more! The fiery Tryal is over, and I am now arriv'd at the Elizium of perfect Peace, entirely unmolested by any warring Passion; the Fears, the Hopes, the Jealousies, and all the endless Train of Cares, which waited on my Hours of Love and fond Delusion, serve but to endear re-gain'd Tranquility; and I can coolly scorn, not hate, your Falshood; and tho' it is a Maxim very much in use among the Women of my Country, that not to revenge, were to deserve Ill-usage; yet I am so far from having a Wish that way, that I shall always esteem your Virtues, and while I pardon, pity your Infirmities; shall praise your flowing Wit, without an indignant Remembrance,

how

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How oft it has been employ'd for my Undoing? shall acknowledge the Brightness of your Eyes, and not in Secret curse the borrow'd Softness of their Glances; shall think on all your past Endearments, your Sighs, your Vows, your melting Kisses, and the warm Fury of your fierce Embraces, but as a pleasing Dream, while Reason slept, and wish not to renew at such a Price.

I desire no Answer to this, nor to be thought of more; go on the same Course you have begun, change till you are tir'd with roving, still let your Eyes enchant, your Tongue delude, and Oaths betray, and all who look, who listen, and believe, be ruin'd and forsaken like

CAMILLA.

THE calm and resolute Resentment which appear'd in the Stile of this Letter gave Frankville very just Grounds to fear it would be no small Difficulty to obtain a Pardon for what he had so rashly written; but when he reflected on the seeming Reasons, which mov'd him to it, and that he should have an Opportunity to let her know them, he was not altogether inconsolable: He pass'd the Night however in a world of Anxiety, and as soon as Morning came, hurried away, to communicate to the Count this fresh Occasion of his Trouble.

It was now D'Elmont's Turn to rally, and he laugh'd as much at those Fears, which he imagin'd causeless, as the other had done at the Assignment he had perswaded him to make with Ciamara; but tho', as most of his Sex are, he was pretty much of the Count's Opinion, yet, the re-instating himself in Camilla's Esteem, was a Matter of too great Importance to him, to suffer him to take one Moment's Ease till he was perfectly assur'd of it.

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AT last, the wish'd-for Hour arriv'd, and he, disguis'd so, as it was impossible for him to be known, attended the Count to that dear Wicket which had so often given him Entrance to *Camilla*; they waited not long for Admittance. *Brione* was ready there to receive them; the Sight of her inflam'd the Heart of Monsieur *Frankville* with all the Indignation imaginable, for he knew her to be the Woman, who, by her Treachery to *Camilla*, had gain'd the Confidence of *Ciamara*, and involv'd him in all the Miseries he had endur'd: But he contain'd himself till she, taking the Count by the Hand, in order to lead him to her Lady, bad him wait her Return, which she told him should be immediately, in an outer Room which she pointed him to.

IN the mean time she conducted the Count to the Door of that magnificent Chamber, where he had been receiv'd by the suppos'd *Camilla*, and where he now beheld the real *Ciamara*, dress'd, if possible, richer than she was the Night before, but loose as wanton Fancy cou'd invent; she was lying on the Couch when he enter'd; and affecting to seem as if she was not presently sensible of his being there, rose not to receive him till he was very near her; they both kept Silence for some Moments, she waiting till he should speak, and he, possibly prevented by the Uncertainty after what Manner he should form his Address, so as to keep an equal Medium between the two Extremes of being cruel or too kind; till at last the Violence of her impatient Expectation burst out in these Words——Oh! that this Silence were the Effect of Love! ——and then perceiving he made no Answer; Tell me (continu'd she) am I forgiven for thus intruding on your *Pity* for a Grant which *Inclination* would not have allow'd me? Cease, Madam (reply'd he) to increase the Confusion which a just Sense of your Favours, and my own Ingratitude

titude has cast me in: How can you look with Eyes so tender and so kind, on him who brings you nothing in Return? Rather despise me, hate me, drive me from your Sight; believe me, as I am, unworthy of your Love, nor squander on a Bankrupt Wretch the noble Treasure: Oh, inhuman! (interrupted she) has then that Mistress, of whose Charms you boasted, engross'd all your Stock of Tenderness? And have you nothing, nothing to repay me for all this Waste of Fondness——this lavish Prodigality of Passion, which forces me beyond my Sex's Pride, or my own natural Modesty, to sue, to court, to kneel and weep for Pity? Pity (resum'd the Count) would be a poor Reward for Love like yours; and yet, alas! (continued he, sighing) 'tis all I have to give; I have already told you I am ty'd by Vows, by Honour, Inclination, to another, who, tho' far absent hence, I still preserve the dear Remembrance of! My Fate will soon recall me back to her and *Paris*; yours fixes you at *Rome*; and since we are doom'd to be for ever separated, it wou'd be base to cheat you with a vain Pretence, and lull you with Hopes of pleasing Dreams a while, when you must quickly wake to added Tortures, and redoubled Woe. Heavens! (cry'd she, with an Air full of Resentment) are then my Charms so mean, my Darts so weak, that near they cannot intercept those shot at such a Distance? And are you that dull, cold Platonist, which can prefer the visionary Pleasures of an *absent* Mistress, to the warm Transports of the substantial *present*? The Count was pretty much surpriz'd at these Words coming from the Mouth of a Woman of Honour; and began now to perceive what her Aim was; but willing to be more confirm'd, Madam (said he) I dare not hope your Virtue wou'd permit——Is this a Time (interrupted she, looking on him with Eyes which sparkled with wild Desires, and left no

want of further Explanation of her Meaning). Is this an Hour to preach of Virtue?—Married—betroth'd, engag'd by Love or Law, what hinders but this Moment you may be mine; this Moment, well improv'd, might give us Joys to baffle a whole Age of Woe; make us, at once, forget our Troubles past, and by its sweet Remembrance, scorn those to come: In speaking these Words, she sunk supinely on *D'Elmour's* Breast; but tho' he was not so ill-natur'd or unmannerly as to repel her, this sort of Treatment made him lose all the Esteem, and great part of the Pity he had conceiv'd for her.

THE Woes of Love are only worthy Commiseration, according to their Causes; and tho' all those kinds of Desire, which the Difference of Sex creates, bear in general the Name of Love, yet they are as vastly wide, as Heaven and Hell. That Passion which aims chiefly at Enjoyment, in Enjoyment ends; the fleeting Pleasure is no more remembred, but all the Stings of Guilt and Shame remain; but that, where the interior Beauties are consulted, and *Souls* are Devotees, is truly noble; Love *there* is a Divinity indeed, because he is immortal and unchangeable; and if our earthy Part partake the Bliss, and craving Nature is in all obey'd, Possession thus desir'd, and thus obtain'd, is far from satiating; *Reason* is not here debas'd to *Sense*, but *Sense* elevates itself to *Reason*, the different Powers unite, and become pure alike.

It was plain that the Passion with which *Ciaramara* was animated, sprung not from this last Source; she had seen the charming Count, was taken with his Beauty, and wish'd no farther than to possess his lovely *Person*; his *Mind* was the least of her Thoughts, for had she had the least Ambition to reign there, she wou'd not have so meanly sought to obtain the one, after he had assur'd her the other, far more noble Part of him, was dispos'd
of.

of. The Grief he had been in, that it was not in his Power to return her Passion, while he believ'd it meritorious, was now chang'd to the utmost Contempt, and her Quality, and the State she liv'd in, did not hinder him from regarding her in as indifferent a manner, as he would have done a common Courtezan.

LoST to all Sense of Honour, Pride or Shame, and wild to gratify her furious Wishes, she spoke, without reserve, all they suggested to her; and lying on his Breast, beheld, without Concern, her Robes fly open, and all the Beauties of her own expos'd, and naked to his View: Mad at his Insensibility, at last she grew more bold, she kiss'd his Eyes—— his Lips——a thousand times: then press'd him in her Arms with strenuous Embraces,——and snatching his Hand and putting it to her Heart, which fiercely bounded at his Touch, bid him be Witness of his mighty Influence there.

THO' it was impossible for any Soul to be capable of a greater or more constant Passion than his felt for *Melliora*; tho' no Man that ever liv'd, was less addicted to loose Desires—— in fine, tho' he really was, as *Frankville* had told him, the most excellent of his Kind, yet, he was still a *Man*! and, 'tis not to be thought strange, if to the Force of such united Temptations, Nature and Modesty a little yielded; warm'd with her Fires, and perhaps, more mov'd by Curiosity, her Behaviour having extinguish'd all his Respect, he gave his Hands and Eyes a full Enjoyment of all those Charms, which had they been answered by a Mind worthy of them, might justly have inspir'd the highest Raptures! while she unshock'd, and unresisting, suffered all he did, and urg'd him with all the Art she was Mistress of, to more; and it is not altogether improbable, that he might not entirely have forgot himself, if a sudden Inter-

ruption had not restor'd his Reason to the Consideration of the Business which had brought him here.

MONSIEUR *Frankville* had all this time been employ'd in a far different manner of Entertainment; *Brione* came to him, according to her Promise, as soon as she had introduc'd the Count to *Ciamara*; and having been commanded by that Lady to discourse with the supposed Servant, and get what she cou'd out of him, of the Count's Affairs, she sat down and began to talk to him with a great deal of Freedom; but he who was too impatient to lose much time, told her, he had a Secret to discover, if the Place they were in was private enough to prevent his being over-heard, and she assuring him that it was, he immediately discover'd who he was, and clapt a Pistol to her Breast, swearing that Moment shou'd be the last of her Life, if she made the least Noise, or attempted to intercept his Passage to *Camilla*: The Terror she was in, made her fall on her Knees, and conjuring him to spare her Life, begg'd a thousand Pardons for her Infidelity, which she told him was not occasion'd by any particular Malice to him; but not being willing to leave *Rome* herself, the Fear of being expos'd to the Revenge of *Ciamara* and *Cittolini*, when they shou'd find out that she had been the Instrument of *Camilla*'s Escape, prevail'd upon her timorous Soul to that Discovery, which was the only means to prevent what she so much dreaded. *Frankville* contented himself with venting his Resentment in two or three hearty Curses; and taking her roughly by the Arm, bid her go with him to *Camilla*'s Apartment, and discover before her what she knew of *Ciamara*'s entertaining Count *D'Elmont* in her Name, which she trembling promis'd to obey, and they both went up a Pair of Back Stairs which led a private way to *Camilla*'s Chambers:

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Chambers: When they enter'd, she was sitting in her Night-Dress on the Bed-side; and the unexpected Sight of *Brione*, who, 'till now, had never ventur'd to appear before her, since her Infidelity, and a Man with her whom she thought a Stranger, fill'd her with such a Surprise, that it depriv'd her of her Speech, and gave *Frankville* time to throw off his Disguise, and catch her in his Arms, with all the Transports of unfeign'd Affection, before she cou'd enough recover her self to make any Resistance; but when she did, it was with all the Violence imaginable; and endeavouring to tear her self away, Villain, said she, comest thou again to triumph over my Weakness,—again to cheat me into fond Belief? There needed no more to make this obsequious Lover relinquish his Hold; and falling at her Feet, was beginning to speak something in his Vindication; when she, quite lost in Rage, prevented him, by renewing her Reproaches in this Manner: Have you not given me up my Vows, resum'd she? have you not abandon'd me to Ruin,—to Death—to Ill-fate—to all the Stings of self-accusing Conscience, and Remorse? And come you now, by your detested Presence, to alarm Remembrance, and new point my Tortures?—That Woman's Treachery, continu'd she, looking on *Brione*, I freely pardon, since by that little Absence it occasion'd, I have discovered the wavering Disposition of your Soul, and learn'd to scorn what is below my Anger. Hear me but speak, cry'd *Frankville*, or if you doubt my Truth, as I confess you have mighty Cause, let her inform you, what seeming Reasons, what Provocations urg'd my hasty Rage to write that fatal,—that accursed Letter. I will hear nothing, reply'd *Camilla*, neither from you nor her.—I see the base Design, and scorn to join in the Deceit,—You had no Cause,—not even the least Pretence

Pretence for your Inconstancy but one, which, tho' you are all guilty of, you all disown; and that is, being lov'd too well.—I lavish'd all the Fondness of my Soul; and you, unable to reward, despis'd it:—But think not that the Rage you now behold me in, proceeds from my Despair—No, your Inconstancy is the Fault of Nature, a Vice which all your Sex are prone to, and 'tis we, the fond Believers, only, are to blame: That I forgave, my Letter told you that I did—but thus to come—thus insolent in Imagination, to dare to hope I were that mean-soul'd Wretch, whose easy Tameness, and whose doating Love, with Joy would welcome your Return, clasp you again in my deluded Arms, and swear you were as dear as ever, is such an Affront to my Understanding, as merits the whole Fury of Revenge! As she spoke these Words, she turn'd disdainfully from him with a Resolution to leave the Room, but she could not make such haste to go away, as the despairing, the distracted *Frankville* did to prevent her, and catching hold of her Garments, Stay, Madam (said he) wildly, either permit me to clear my self of this barbarous Accusation, or, if you are resolv'd unhearing to condemn me, behold me satiate all your Rage can wish; for by Heaven, continued he, holding the Pistol to his own Breast, as he had done a little before to *Brione's*, by all the Joys I have possess'd, by all the Hell I now endure, this Moment I'll be receiv'd your Lover, or expire your Martyr. These Words pronounc'd so passionately, and the Action that accompany'd them, made a visible Alteration in *Camilla's* Countenance, but it lasted not long, and resuming her Fierceness; Your Death (cry'd she) this way would give me little Satisfaction, the World would judge more noble of my Resentment, if by my Hand you fell—Yet continu'd she, snatching the Pistol from him, and throwing it out of the

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the Window, which happen'd to be open, I will not——cannot be the Executioner.——No, live! and let the Punishment be, in reality to endure, what thou well dissemblest, the Pangs, the racking Pangs, of hopeless, endless Love!——May'st thou indeed love me, as thou a thousand times hast falsely sworn,——for ever love, and I for ever hate! In this last Sentence, she flew like Lightning to her Closet, and shut herself in, leaving the amaz'd Lover still on his Knees, stupified with Grief and Wonder. All this while *Brione* had been casting about in her Mind, how to make the best Use of this Adventure with *Ciamara*, and encourag'd by *Camilla's* Behaviour, and taking Advantage of *Frankville's* Confusion, made but one Step to the Chamber Door, and running out into the Gallery, and down Stairs, cry'd Murder,——Help,——a Rape——Help, or *Donna Camilla* will be carry'd away.——She had no occasion to call often, for the Pistol which *Camilla* threw out of the Window chanc'd to go off in the Fall, and the Report it made, had alarm'd some of the Servants who were in an Out-house adjoining to the Garden, and imagining there were Thieves, were gathering to search: Some arm'd with Staves, some with Iron Bars, or any Thing they could get in the Hurry they were in; as they were running confusedly about, they met Monsieur *Frankville* pursuing *Brione*, with a Design to stop her Mouth, either by Threatnings or Bribes; but she was too nimble for him; and knowing the Ways of the House much better than he did, went directly to the Room where *Ciamara* was caressing the Count in the manner already mention'd: Oh, Madam, said she, you are impos'd on, the Count has deceiv'd your Expectations, and brought Monsieur *Frankville* in Disguise to rob you of *Camilla*. These Words made them both, though with
very

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very different Sentiments, start from the Posture they were in, and *Ciamara* changing her Air of Tenderness for one all Fury, Monster (cry'd she, to *D'Elmont*) have you then betray'd me? This is no time (reply'd he, hearing a great Bustle, and *Frankville's* Voice pretty loud without) for me to answer you; my Honour calls me to my Friend's Assistance; and drawing his Sword, run as the Noise directed him to the Place where *Frankville* was defending himself against a little Army of *Ciamara's* Servants; she was not much behind him, and enrag'd to the highest Degree, cry'd out, Kill, kill them both! but that was not a Task for a much greater Number of such as them to accomplish; and though their Weapons might easily have beat down, or broke the Gentlemen's Swords, yet their Fears kept them from coming too near, and *Ciamara* had the Vexation to see them both retreat with Safety, and herself disappointed, as well in her Revenge, as in her Love.

NOTHING could be more surpriz'd than Count *D'Elmont* was, when he got home, and heard from *Frankville* all that had pass'd between him and *Camilla*; nor was his Trouble less, that he had it not in his Power to give him any Advice in an Exigence so uncommon: He did all he could to comfort and divert his Sorrows, but in vain; the Wounds of bleeding Love admit no Ease, but from the Hand which gave them; and he, who was naturally rash and fiery, now grew to that Height of Desperation and Violence of Temper, that the Count fear'd some fatal Catastrophe, and would not suffer him to stir from him that Night, nor the next Day, till he had oblig'd him to make a Vow, and bind it with the most solemn Imprecations, not to offer any thing against his Life.

BUT

BUT tho' plung'd into the lowest Depth of Misery, and lost, to all human Probability, in an inextricable Labyrinth of Woe, Fortune will find at last some Way to raise and disentangle those whom she is pleas'd to make her Favourites ; and that Monsieur *Frankville* was one, an unexpected Adventure made him know.

THE third Day from that, in which he had seen *Camilla*, as he was sitting in his Chamber, in a melancholy Conversation with the Count, who was then come to visit him, his Servants brought him a Letter, which he said had been just left by a Woman of an extraordinary Appearance, and who the Moment she had given it into his Hand, got from the Door with so much Speed, that she seem'd rather to vanish than to walk.

WHILE the Servant was speaking, *Frankville* look'd on the Count with a kind of a pleas'd Expectation in his Eye ; but then casting 'em on the Direction of the Letter, Alas ! (said he) how vain was my Imagination ! this is not *Camilla's*, but a Hand to which I am utterly a Stranger. These Words were clos'd with a Sigh, and he open'd it with a Negligence, which would have been unpardonable, could he have guess'd at the Contents ; but as soon as he saw the Name of *Violetta* at the Bottom, a Flash of Hope re-kindled in his Soul, and trembling with Impatience he read.





TO MONSIEUR FRANKVILLE.

I Think it cannot be call'd Treachery, if we betray the Secrets of a Friend, only when Concealment were an Injury; but however I may be able to answer this Breach of Trust, I am about to make, to myself, 'tis your Behaviour alone, which can absolve me to Camilla, and by your Fidelity she must judge of mine.

Tho' Daughter to the Man she hates, she finds nothing in me unworthy of her Love and Confidence; and as I have been privy, ever since your mutual Misfortunes, to the whole History of your Amour, so I am now no Stranger to the Sentiments your last Conversation has inspir'd her with—She loves you still, Monsieur—with an Extremity of Passion loves you—But, tho' she ceases to believe you unworthy of it, her Indignation for your unjust Suspicion of her will not be easily remov'd—she is resolv'd to act the Heroine, tho' to purchase that Character it should cost her Life: she is determin'd for a Cloyster, and has declar'd her Intention, and a few Days will take away all Possibility of ever being yours; but I, who know the Conflicts she endures, wish it may be in your Power to prevent the Execution of a Design, which cannot but be fatal to her: My Father and Ciaramara, I wish I could not call her Aunt, were last Night in private Conference; but I over-heard enough of their Discourse, to know there has been some ungenerous Contrivance carry'd on to make you and Camilla appear guilty to each other; and 'tis from that Knowledge I derive my Hopes, that you have Honour enough to make a right Use of this Discovery. If you have any thing to say, to further the

Inter-

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Intercessions I am employ'd in, to serve you, prepare a Letter, which I will either prevail on her to read, or oblige her, in spite of the Resolution she has made, to bear: But take care, that in the least you hint not that you have receiv'd one from me, for I shall persuade her that the Industry of your Love has found means of conveying it to me, without my Knowledge: Bring it with you this Evening to St. Peter's, and as soon as divine Service is over, follow her who shall drop her Handkerchief as she passes you, for by that Mark you shall distinguish her whom you yet know but by the Name of

VIOLETTA.

P. S. One Thing, and indeed not the least, which induc'd me to write, I had almost forgot, which is that your Friend, the accomplish'd Count D'Elmont, is as much endanger'd by the Resentment of *Ciamara*, as yourself by that of my Father: Bid him beware how he receives any Letter, or Present from a Hand unknown, lest he should experience, what he has doubtless heard of, our *Italian Art* of poisoning by the Smell.

WHEN Monsieur *Frankville* had given this Letter to the Count to read, which he immediately did, they both of them broke into the highest Encomiums on this young Lady's Generosity; who, contrary to the Custom of her Sex, which seldom forgives an Affront of that kind, made it her study to serve the Man who had refus'd her, and make her Rival blest.

THESE Testimonies of a grateful Acknowledgment being over, *Frankville* told the Count he believ'd the most and indeed the only effectual Means to extinguish *Camilla's* Resentment, would be entirely to remove the Cause, which could be done no other way, than by giving her a full Account of *Ciamara's* Behaviour, while she

she pass'd for her: *D'Elmont* readily consented, and thought it not at all inconsistent with his Honour, to expose that of a Woman who had shewn so little Value for it herself; and when he saw that *Frankville* had finish'd his Letter, which was very long, for Lovers cannot easily come to a Conclusion, he offer'd to write a Note to her, enclos'd in the other, which should serve as an Evidence of the Truth of what he had alledged in his Vindication: *Frankville* gladly embrac'd the kind Proposal, and the other immediately made it good in these Words.



TO DONNA CAMILLA.

MADAM

I*F the Severity of your Justice requires a Victim, I only am guilty, who being impos'd upon myself, endeavour'd, for I cannot say I could accomplish it, to involve the unfortunate Frankville in the same fatal Error, and at last, prevail'd on him to write, what he could not be brought, by all my Arguments, to think.*

LET the Cause which led me to take this Freedom, excuse the Presumption of it, which from one so much a Stranger, would be else unpardonable: But when we are conscious of a Crime, the first Reparation we can make to Innocence is, to acknowledge we have offended; and if the Confession of my Faults, may purchase an Absolution for my Friend, I shall account it the noblest Work of Supererogation.

BE assur'd, that as inexorable as you are, your utmost Rigour would find its Satisfaction, if you could be sensible of what I suffer in a sad Repentance for
my

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my Sin of injuring so heavenly a Virtue ; and perhaps, in Time be mov'd by it, to pity and forgive

The unhappily deceiv'd

D'ELMONT.

THE Time in which they had done writing, immediately brought on that of *Violetta's* Appointment ; and the Count would needs accompany Monsieur *Frankville* in this Assignment, saying, he had an Acknowledgment to pay that Lady, which he thought himself oblig'd, in good Manners and Gratitude, to take this Opportunity to do ; and the other being of the same Opinion, they went together to St. *Peter's*.

WHEN Prayers were done, which, 'tis probable, one of these Gentlemen, if not both, might think too tedious, they stood up, and looking round, impatiently expected when the promis'd Signal should be given ; but among the great Number of Ladies which pass'd by them, there were very few who did not stop a little to gaze on these two accomplish'd Chevaliers ; and they were several times tantaliz'd with an imaginary *Violetta*, before the real one appear'd. But when the Crowd were almost dispers'd, and they began to fear some Accident had prevented her coming, the long expected Token was let fall, and she who threw it, tript hastily away to the farther End of the Colonnade, which happen'd to be entirely void of Company ; the Count and his Companion were not long behind her, and Monsieur *Frankville*, being the Person chiefly concern'd, address'd himself to her in this Manner : With what Words, Madam (said he) can a Man so infinitely oblig'd, and so desirous to be grateful, as *Frankville*, sufficiently make known his Admiration of a Generosity like yours ? Such an unbounded Goodness

ness shames all Description! makes Language vile, since it affords no Phrase to suit your Worth, or speak the mighty Sense my Soul has of it. I have no other Aim, reply'd she, in what I have done, than Justice; and 'tis only in the Proof of your Sincerity to *Camilla*, that I am to be thank'd. *Frankville* was about to answer with some Assurances of his Faith, when the Count stepping forward, prevented him: My Friend, Madam (said he, bowing) is most happy in having it in his Power to obey a Command, which is the utmost of his Wishes: but how must I acquit myself of any Part of that Return which is due to you, for that generous Care you have been pleas'd to express for the Preservation of my Life? There needs no more, interrupted she, with a perceivable Alteration in her Voice, than to have seen Count *D'Elmont*, to be interested in his Concerns—— She paus'd a little after speaking these Words, and then, as if she thought she had said too much, turn'd hastily to *Frankville*, The Letter Monsieur, continu'd she, the Letter——'tis not impossible but we may be observ'd,——I tremble with the Apprehension of a Discovery. *Frankville*, immediately deliver'd it to her, but saw so much Disorder in her Gesture, that it very much surpris'd him: She trembled indeed, but whether occasioned by any Danger she perceiv'd of being taken notice of, or some other secret Agitation she felt within, was then unknown to any but herself: but whatever it was, it transported her so far as to make her quit the Place, without being able to take any other Leave than a hasty Curtesy, and bidding *Frankville* meet her the next Morning at *Mattjins*.

HERE was a new Cause of Disquiet to *D'Elmont*; the Experience he had of the too fatal Influence of his dangerous Attractions, gave him sufficient Reason to fear this young Lady was not in-

insensible of them, and that his Presence was the sole Cause of her Disorder; however, he said nothing of it to *Frankville* till the other mentioning it to him, and repeating her Words, they both join'd in the Opinion, that Love had been too busy in her Heart, and that it was the feeling the Effects of it herself, had inclined her to so much Compassion for the Miseries she saw it inflicted upon others. The Count very well knew, that when Desires of this Kind are springing in the Soul, every Sight of the beloved Object increases their Growth; and therefore, though her generous manner of Proceeding had created in him a very great Esteem, and he wou'd have been pleas'd with her Conversation, yet he ceas'd to wish a farther Acquaintance with her, lest it should render her more unhappy, and forbore going the next Day to Church with *Frankville*, as else he wou'd have done.

VIOLETTA fail'd not to come as she had promis'd; but instead of dropping her Handkerchief, as she had done the Evening before, she knelt as close to him as she cou'd; and pulling him gently by the Sleeve, oblig'd him to regard her, who else, not knowing her, wou'd not have suspected she was so near, and slipt a Note into his Hand, bidding him softly not take any farther notice of her. He obey'd, but 'tis reasonable to believe, was too impatient to know what the Contents were, to listen with much Attention and Devotion to the Remainder of the Ceremony. As soon as he was releas'd, he got into a Corner of the Cathedral, where, unobserv'd, he might satisfy his Curiosity, which none, who love, will condemn him for, any more than they will for the thrilling Extacy which fill'd his Soul at the reading these Lines,

To



TO Monsieur FRANKVILLE.

FOR fear I should not have an Opportunity of speaking to you in Safety, I take this Method to inform you, that I have been so successful in my Negotiation, as to make Camilla repent the Severity of her Sentence, and wish for nothing more than to recall it; you are now intirely justified in her Opinion, by the Artifice which was made use of to deceive you; and she is, I believe, no less enrag'd at Ciamara, for depriving her of that Letter you sent by the Count, than she was at you for that unkind one which came to her Hands. She is now under less Restraint, since Brione's Report of her Behaviour to you, and the everlasting Resentment she vow'd, and I have prevail'd on her to accompany me in a Visit I am to make to-morrow in the Evening, to Donna Clara Metteline, a Nun in the Monastery of St. Augustine; and if you will meet us there, I believe it not impossible but she may be brought to a Confession of all I have discover'd to you of her Thoughts.

THE Count's Letter was of no small Service to you; for tho' without that Evidence she wou'd have been convinc'd of your Constancy, yet she wou'd hardly have acknowledg'd she was so; and if he will take the Pains to come with you to-morrow, I believe his Company will be acceptable; if you think it proper, you may let him know as much from

VIOLETTA.

P. S. I beg a thousand Pardons both of you and the Count, for the Abruptness of my Departure
last

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last Night; something happened to give me a Confusion, from which I could not at that time recover, but hope for the future to be more Mistress of myself.

MONSIEUR *Frankville* hastened to the Count's Lodgings, to communicate his good Fortune, but found him in a Humour very unfit for Congratulations; the Post had just brought him a Letter from his Brother, the Chevalier *Brilliant*, the Contents whereof were these.



TO COUNT D'ELMONT.

MY LORD,

TIS with an inexpressible Grief that I obey the Commands you left me, for giving you from time to time an exact Account of Melliora's Affairs; since what I have now to acquaint you with, will make you stand in need of all your Moderation to support it. But not to keep your Expectation on the Rack, loth as I am, I must inform you, that Melliora is by some unknown Ravisher, stolen from the Monastery—The manner of it (as I have since learned from those who were with her) was thus: As she was walking in the Feilds, behind the Cloyster Gardens, accompany'd by some young Ladies, Pensioners there as well as herself, four Men well mounted, but disguis'd, and muffled, rode up to them; three of them jump'd off their Horses, and while one seiz'd on the defenceless Prey, and bore her to his Arms who was not alighted, the other two caught hold of her Companions, and prevented the Out-Cries they would have made, till she was carry'd out of Sight; then mounting again their Horses, immediately lost the amaz'd Virgins all Hopes of recovering her.

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I conjure my dearest Brother to believe there has been nothing omitted for the Discovery of this Villainy; but in spite of all the Pains and Care we have taken in the Search, none of us have yet been happy enough to hear the least Account of her; That my next may bring you more welcome News, is the first Wish of,

My Lord,

Your Lordship's

Most Zealously Affectionate Brother,

And humble Servant,

BRILLIAN.

P. S. THERE are some People here, malicious enough to report, that the Design of carrying away *Melliora* was contriv'd by you, and that it is in *Rome* she only can be found. It wou'd be of great Advantage to my Peace, if I cou'd be of the Number of those who believe it; but I am too well acquainted with your Principles, to harbour such a Thought. Once more, my dear Lord, for this Time,

Adieu.

AFTER the Count had given this Letter to *Frankville* to read, he told him, he was resolv'd to leave *Rome* the next Day; that no body had so great an Interest in her Recovery as himself; that he would trust the Search of her to no other, and swore, with the most dreadful Imprecations he could make, never to rest, but wander, Knight-Errant like, over the whole World 'till he had found her.

Tho'

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THO' Monsieur *Frankville* was extremely concern'd at what had happened to his Sister, yet he endeavour'd to dissuade the Count from leaving *Rome*, till he knew the Result of his own Affair with *Camilla*; but all his Arguments were for a long Time ineffectual, till at last, shewing him *Violetta's* Letter, he prevail'd on him to defer his Journey till they had first seen *Camilla*, on Condition, that if she persisted in her Rigour, he should give over any further Sollicitations, and accompany him to *Paris*: This *Frankville* promis'd to perform, and they pass'd the time in very uneasy and impatient Cogitations, 'till the next Day about five in the Evening they prepar'd for the Appointment.

COUNT *D'Elmont* and his longing Companion, were the first at the Rendezvous, but in a very little while they perceiv'd two Women coming towards them: The Idea of *Camilla* was always too much in *Frankville's* Thoughts, not to make him know her, by that charming Air (which he so much ador'd her for) tho' she was veiled never so closely; and the Moment he had sight of them, O Heaven! (cry'd he to *D'Elmont*) yonder she comes, that——that! my Lord, is the divine *Camilla*; As they came pretty near, she that indeed prov'd to be *Camilla*, was turning on one Side, in order to go to the Grate, where she expected the Nun: Hold, hold, Donna *Camilla*, cry'd *Violetta*, I cannot suffer you should pass by your Friends with an Air so unconcerned! if Monsieur *Frankville* has done any thing to merit your Displeasure, my Lord the Count certainly deserves your Notice, in the Pains he has taken to undeceive you. One so much a Stranger as Count *D'Elmont* is, answered she, may very well excuse my Thanks for an Explanation, which had he been acquainted with me, he would have spar'd. Cruel *Camilla*! said

Frankville, is then the Knowledge of my Innocence unwelcome?—Am I become so hateful? or are you so chang'd, that you wish'd me guilty for a Justification of your Rigour? If it be so, I have no Remedy but Death, which tho' you depriv'd me of the last time I saw you, I now can find a thousand Means to compass. He pronounc'd these Words in so tender, yet so resolv'd an Accent, that *Camilla* could not conceal part of the Impression they made on her, and putting her Handkerchief to her Eyes, which in spite of all she had done to prevent it, overflow'd with Tears; Talk not of Death (said she) I am not cruel to that Degree; live! *Frankville*, live!—but live without *Camilla*! Oh! it is impossible! resum'd he, the latter part of your Command entirely destroys the first—Life without your Love, would be a Hell, which I confess my Soul's a Coward but to think of.

THE Count and *Violetta* were silent all this Time; and perceiving they were in a fair way of Reconciliation, thought the best they could do to forward it, was to leave them to themselves; and walking a few Paces from them; You suffer, my Lord (said she) for your Generosity in accompanying your Friend, since it condemns you to the Conversation of a Person, who has neither Wit, nor Gaiety sufficient to make herself diverting. Those reply'd he, who would make the excellent *Violetta* a Subject of Diversion, ought never to be bless'd with the Company of any, but such Women who merit not a serious Regard: But you, indeed, were your Soul capable of descending to the Follies of your Sex, would be extremely at a Loss in Conversation, so little qualified as mine, to please the Vanities of the Fair; and you stand in need of all those more than manly Virtues you possess, to pardon a Chagrin, which even your Presence cannot dissipate. If it could (interrupted she)

she) I assure your Lordship, I should much more rejoice in the happy Effects of it on you, than pride myself in the Power of such an Influence——And yet (continued she, with a Sigh) I am a very Woman, and if free from the usual Affectations and Vanities of my Sex, I am not so from Faults, perhaps, less worthy of Forgiveness. The Count could not presently resolve what Reply to make to these Words; he was unwilling she should believe he wanted Complaisance, and afraid of saying any thing that might give room for a Declaration of what he had no Power of answering to her Wish; but after the Consideration of a Moment or two, Madam (said he) tho' I dare not question your Sincerity in any other Point, yet you must give me leave to disbelieve you in this, not only because, in my Opinion, there is nothing so contemptibly ridiculous as that Self-sufficiency, and vain Desire of pleasing, commonly known by the Name of *Coquetry*; but also, because she who escapes the Contagion of this Error, will not, without much Difficulty, be led into any other. Alas! my Lord (cry'd *Violetta*) how vastly wide of Truth is this Assertion? That very Foible, which is most pernicious to our Sex, is chiefly by *Coquetry* prevented: I need not tell you that 'tis Love I mean; and as blameable as you think the one, I believe the other would find less Favour from a Person of your Lordship's Judgment. How! Madam (interrupted the Count, pretty warmly) have I the Character of a Stoick?—Or do you imagine that my Soul is compos'd of that coarse Stuff, as not to be capable of receiving, or approving a Passion, which all the Brave and Generous think it their Glory to profess, and which can only give refin'd Delight to Minds ennobled?—But I perceive (continu'd he) growing more cool, I am not happy enough in your Esteem, to be thought worthy the Influence of that God. Still you mistake my Mean-

ing, said *Violetta* ; I doubt not of your Sensibility, were there a Possibility of finding a Woman worthy of inspiring you with soft Desires, and if that should ever happen, Love would be so far from being a Weakness, that it would serve rather as an Embellishment to your other Graces ; 'tis only when we stoop to Objects below our Consideration, or vainly wing our Wishes to those above our Hopes, that makes us appear ridiculous or contemptible ; but either of these is a Folly which, ——— Which the incomparable *Violetta* (interrupted *D'Elmont*) never can be guilty of. You have a very good Opinion of my Wit (resum'd she, in a very melancholy Tone) but I should be much happier than I am, if I were sure I could secure myself from doing any thing to forfeit it. I believe (reply'd the Count) there are not many things you have less Reason to apprehend than such a Change ; and I am confident were I to stay in *Rome* as many Ages, as I am determined to do but Hours, I should at last leave it, with the same Esteem and Admiration of your singular Virtues, as I now shall do. *Violetta* could not prevent the Disorder these Words put her into, from discovering itself in the Accent of her Voice, when, How ! my Lord (said she) are we then to lose you ? — Lose you in so short a Time ? As the Count was about to answer, *Frankville* and *Camilla* join'd them, and looking on *Frankville*, If any Credit, (said he) may be given to the Language of the Eyes, I am certain yours speak Success, and I may congratulate a Happiness you lately cou'd not be persuaded to hope. Had I a thousand Eyes (cry'd the transported Lover) a thousand Tongues, they all would be but insignificant to express the Joy — the unbounded Extacy, my Soul is full of, — but take the mighty Meaning in one Word, — *Camilla's* mine — for ever mine ! — the Storm is past, and all the sunny Heaven of Love returns to bless my future

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ture Days with ceaseless Raptures : Now, my Lord, I am ready to attend you in your Journey ; this bright ! this beauteous Guardian Angel will partake our Flight ! And we have nothing now to do, but to prepare with Secrecy and Speed fit Means for our Escape. As soon as *Frankville* had left off speaking, Count *D'Elmont*, addressing himself to *Camilla*, made her abundance of Re-tributions for the Happiness she gave his Friend, which she receiv'd with a becoming Chearfulness, and unaffected Gaiety : I am afraid (said she) your Lordship will think a Woman's Resolution is henceforth little worth regarding ; but (continu'd she, taking *Violetta* by the Hand) I see well, that this unfaithful Creature, has betray'd me, and to punish her Infidelity, will, by leaving her, put it out of her Power to deceive my Confidence again. *Violetta* either did not hear, or was not in a Condition to return her Raillery, nor the Praises which the Count and Monsieur *Frankville* concurr'd in, of her Generosity, and stood motionless and lost in Thought, till *Camilla* seeing it grow towards Night, told the Gentlemen, she thought it best to part, not only to avoid any Suspicion at Home of their being out so long, but also that the others might order every thing proper for their Departure, which it was agreed on between *Frankville* and her should be the next Night, to prevent the Success of those mischievous Designs she knew *Ciamara* and *Cittolini* were forming against both the Count and Monsieur *Frankville*.

MATTERS being thus adjusted to the entire Satisfaction of the Lovers, and not in a much less Proportion to the Count, they thought it best to avoid making any more Appointments till they met to part no more ; which was to be at the Wicket at dead of Night. When the Count took leave of *Violetta*, this being the last time he

could expect to see her, she was hardly able to return his Civilities, and much less to answer those which *Frankville* made her, after the Count had turn'd from her to give him way ; both of them guess'd the Cause of her Confusion, and *D'Elmont* felt a Concern in observing it, which nothing but that for *Melliora* could surpass.

THE next Day found full Employment for them all ; but the Count, as well as *Frankville*, was too impatient to be gone, to neglect any thing requisite for their Departure ; there was not the least Particular wanting, long before the time they were to wait at the Wicket for *Camilla*'s coming forth : The Count's Lodging being the nearest, they staid there, watching for the long'd-for Hour ; but a little before it arriv'd, a Yout^h, who seem'd to be about 13 or 14 Years of Age, desir'd to be admitted to the Count's Presence : which being granted, pulling a Letter out of his Pocket, and blushing as he approach'd him : I come, my Lord (said he) from Donna *Violetta* ; the Contents of this will inform you on what Business ; But lest the Treachery of others should render me suspected, permit me to break it open, and prove it carries no Infection : The Count look'd earnestly on him while he spoke, and was strangely taken with the uncommon Beauty and Modesty which he observ'd in him : You need not give yourself the Trouble of that Experiment (answer'd he) Donna *Violetta*'s Name, and your own engaging Aspect, are sufficient Credentials, if I were liable to doubt ; in saying this, he took the Letter, and full of Fears that some Accident had happen'd to *Camilla*, which might retard their Journey, hastily read over these Lines.



To the Worthy Count D'ELMONT.

My LORD,

IF any Part of that Esteem you profess'd to have for me be real, you will not deny the Request I make you to accept this Youth, who is my Relation, in Quality of a Page: He is inclin'd to travel, and of all Places, France is that which he is most desirous of going to: If a diligent Care, a faithful Secrecy, and an unceasing Watchfulness to please, can render him acceptable to your Service, I doubt not but he will, by those, recommend himself hereafter: In the mean time beg you will receive him on my Word: And if that will be any Inducement to prejudice you in his Favour, I assure you, that tho' he is in one Degree nearer in Blood to my Father, he is by many in Humour and Principles to

VIOLETTA.

P. S. May Health, Safety, and Prosperity attend you in your Journey: and all the Happiness you wish for, crown the End.

THE young *Fidelio*, for he was so called, could not wish to be received with greater Demonstrations of Kindness than those the Count gave him: And perceiving that *Violetta* had trusted him with the whole Affair of their leaving Rome in private, doubted not of his Conduct, and consulted with him, who they found knew the Place perfectly well, after what Manner they should watch, with the least Danger of being discover'd, for *Camilla's* opening the Wicket: *Frankville*

was for going alone, lest if any of the Servants should happen to be about, one Person would be less liable to Suspicion, than if a Company were seen; the Count thought it most proper to go all together, remembring *Frankville* of the Danger he had lately escap'd, and might again be brought into; but *Fidelio* told them, he would advise that they two should remain conceal'd in the Portico of the Convent of St. *Francis*, while himself would watch alone at the Wicket for *Camilla*, and lead her to them, and then afterwards they might go all together to that Place where the Horses and Servants should attend them: The Page's Counsel was approv'd by both of them, and the time being arriv'd, what they had contriv'd was immediately put in Execution.

EVERY thing happen'd according to their Desire: *Camilla* got safely to the Arms of her impatient Lover; and they all taking Horse, rode with such Speed, as some of them would have been little able to bear, if any thing less than Life and Love had been at Stake.

THEIR eager Wishes, and the Goodness of their Horses, brought them, before Day-break, many Miles from *Rome*; but tho' they avoided all high Roads, and travel'd cross the Country to prevent being met or overtook by any that might know them, yet their Desire of seeing themselves in a Place of Security was so great, that they refus'd to stop to take any Refreshment 'till the next Day was almost spent; but when they were come into the House where they were to lie that Night, not all the Fatigue they had endur'd, kept the Lovers from giving and receiving all the Testimonies imaginable of mutual Affection.

THE Sight of their Felicity added new Wings to Count *D'Elmont's* Impatience to recover *Melhora*; but when he consider'd the little Probability of that Hope, he grew inconsolable, and his

his new Page *Fidelio*, who lay on a Pallet in the same Room with him, put all his Wit, of which he had no small Stock, upon the Stretch, to divert his Sorrows; he talked to him, sung to him, told him a hundred pretty Stories, and, in fine, made good the Character *Violetta* had given him so well, that the Count look'd on him as a Blessing sent from Heaven to lessen his Misfortunes, and make his Woes fit easy.

THEY continu'd travelling with the same Expedition as when they first set out, for three or four Days; but then, believing themselves secure from any Pursuit, began to slacken their Pace, and make the Journey more delightful to *Camilla* and *Fidelio*, who not being accustomed to ride in that manner, would never have been able to support it, if the Strength of their Minds had not by far exceeded that of their Bodies.

THEY had gone so much about, in seeking the By-Roads, that they made it three times as long before they arrived at *Avignon*, a small Village on the Borders of *Italy*, as any, that had come the direct way would have done; but the Caution they had observed, was not altogether needless, as they presently found.

A GENTLEMAN, who had been a particular Acquaintance of Monsieur *Frankville's* overtook 'em at this Place, and after expressing some Amazement to find them no farther on their Journey, told Monsieur *Frankville* he believed he could inform him of some Things which happen'd since his Departure, and could not yet have reach'd his Knowledge; which the other desiring him to do, the Gentleman began in this manner:

It was no sooner Day, said he, than it was nois'd all over the City, that Donna *Camilla*, Count *D'Elmont*, and yourself, had privately left *Rome*; every Body spoke of it, according to their Humour; but the Friends of *Ciamara* and

Cittolini were outrageous ; a Complaint was immediately made to the Consistory, and all imaginable Diligence us'd to overtake, or stop you ; but you were so happy as to escape, and the Pursuers return'd without doing any thing they went about : Tho' *Cittolini's* Disappointment, to all Appearance, was the greatest, yet *Ciamara* bore it with the least Patience ; and having vainly rag'd, offer'd all the Treasure she was Mistress of, and perhaps spent the best part of it in fruitless Means to bring you back, at last she swallowed Poison, and in the raving Agonies of Death, confess'd, that it was not the Loss of *Camilla*, but Count *D'Elmont* which was the Cause of her Despair. Her Death gave a fresh Occasion of Grief to *Cittolini*, but the Day in which she was interr'd, brought him yet a nearer ; he had sent to his *Villa* for his Daughter *Violetta* to assist at the Funeral, and the Messenger return'd with the surprizing Account of her not having been there, as she pretended she was ; nothing was ever equal to the Rage, the Grief, and the Amazement of this distracted Father, when, after the strictest Enquiry and Search that could be made, she was no where to be found or heard of ; it threw him into a Fever, of which he linger'd but a small Time, and dy'd the same Day on which I left *Rome*.

THE Gentleman who made this Recital, was entirely a Stranger to any of the Company but Monsieur *Frankville*, and they were retired into a private Room during the time of their Conversation, which lasted not long ; *Frankville* was impatient to communicate to *Camilla* and *D'Elmont* what he had heard, and as soon as Civility would permit, took leave of the Gentleman.

THE Count had too much Compassion in his Nature not to be extremely troubled when he was told this melancholy Catastrophe ; but *Camilla* said little ; the ill Usage of *Ciamara*,
and

and the impudent, and interested Pretensions of *Cittolini* to her, kept her from being so much concerned at their Misfortunes, as she would have been at any other Person's; and the Generosity of her Temper, or some other Reason which the Reader will not be ignorant of hereafter, from expressing any Satisfaction in the Punishment they had met: But when the Count, who most of all lamented *Violetta*, express'd his Astonishment and Affliction at her Elopement, she join'd with him in the Praises of that young Lady, with an Eagerness, which testify'd, she had no part in the Hatred she bore her Father.

WHILE they were discoursing, *Camilla* observ'd that *Fidelio*, who was all this while in the Room, grew very pale, and at last saw him drop on the Ground quite senseless; she run to him, as did his Lord and Monsieur *Frankville*, and after, by throwing Water into his Face, they brought him to himself again, he appear'd in such an Agony, that they fear'd his Fit would return, and order'd him to be laid on a Bed, and carefully attended.

AFTER they had taken a short Repast, they began to think of setting forward on their Journey, designing to reach *Piedmont* that Night: The Count went himself to the Chamber where his Page was laid, and finding he was very ill, told him he thought it best for him to remain in that Place; that he would order Physicians to attend him; and that when he was fully recover'd, he might follow them to *Paris* with Safety. *Fidelio* was ready to faint a second Time, at the hearing of these Words, and with the most earnest Conjurations, accompany'd with Tears, begg'd that he might not be left behind: I can but die, said he, if I go with you; but I am sure, that nothing, if I stay, can save me. The Count seeing him so pressing, sent for a Litter, but there was none to be got, and, in spite of what *Camilla* or *Frankville* could say
to

to dissuade him, having his Lord's Leave, he ventured to attend him, as he had done the former Part of the Journey.

THEY travell'd at an easy rate, because of *Fidelio's* Indisposition, and it being later than they imagined, Night came upon them before they were aware of it, usher'd in by one of the most dreadful Storms that ever was; the Rain, the Hail, the Thunder, and the Lightning, was so violent, that it obliged them to mend their Pace to get into some Place of Shelter, for there was no House near: But to make their Misfortune the greater, they mis'd the Road, and rode considerably out of their Way before they perceiv'd that they were wrong; the Darknes of the Night, which had no other Illumination than now and then a horrid Flash of Lightning, the Wilderness of the Desert, which they had stray'd into, and the little Hopes they had of being able to get out of it, at least till Day, were sufficient to have struck Terror in the boldest Heart: *Camilla* stood in need of all her Love to protect her from the Fears which were beginning to assault her; but poor *Fidelio* felt an inward Horror, which, by this dreadful Scene encreas'd, made him appear wholly desperate: Wretch that I am, cry'd he, 'tis for me the Tempest rises! I justly have incurr'd the Wrath of Heaven,—and you who are innocent, by my accurs'd Offence are drawn to share a Punishment only due to Crimes like mine! In this manner he exclaim'd, wringing his Hands in bitter Anguish, and rather exposing his lovely Face to all the Fury of the Storm, than any Way endeavouring to defend it. His Lord, and the two generous Lovers, tho' harass'd almost to Death themselves, said all they could to comfort him; the Count and Monsieur *Frankville* considered his Words, rather as Effects of his Indisposition, and the Fatigue he endur'd, than Remorse for any Crime he could have

have been guilty of, and the Pity they had for one so young and innocent, made the Cruelty of the Weather more insupportable to them.

AT last, after long wandering, and the Tempest still encreasing, one of the Servants, who was before, was happy enough to explore a Path, and cry'd out to his Lord with a great deal of Joy, of the Discovery he had made; they were all of Opinion that it must lead to some House, because the Ground was beat down, as if with the Feet of Passengers, and entirely free from Stubble, Stones, and Stumps of Trees, as the other Part of the Desert they came thro' was encumbered with.

THEY had not rode very far before they discern'd Lights: The Reader may imagine the Joy this Sight produced, and that they were not slow in making their Approach, encouraged by such a wish'd-for Signal of Success. When they came pretty near, they saw by the number of Lights, which were dispers'd in several Rooms distant from each other, that it was a very large and magnificent House, and made no doubt, but that it was the Country-Seat of some Person of great Quality: The wet Condition they were in, made them almost ashamed of appearing, and they agreed not to discover who they were, if they found they were unknown.

THEY had no sooner knock'd, than the Gate was immediately open'd by a Porter, who asking their Business, the Count told him they were Gentlemen, who had been so unfortunate to mistake the Road to *Piedmont*, and desir'd the Owner's Leave for Refuge in his House, for that Night; That is a Courtesy, said the Porter, which my Lord never refuses; and in Confidence of his Assent, I may venture to desire you to alight, and bid you welcome: They all accepted the Invitation, and were conducted into a stately Hall, where they waited not long before the Marquis *De Sanguillier*,
having

having been inform'd they appear'd like People of Condition, came himself to confirm the Character his Servants had given of his Hospitality. He was a Man perfectly well bred, and in spite of the Disadvantages their Fatigue had subjected them to, he saw something in the Countenance of these Travellers, which commanded his Respect, and engag'd him to receive them with a more than ordinary Civility.

ALMOST the first thing the Count desir'd, was that his Page might be taken care of; he was presently carry'd to Bed, and *Camilla* (to whom the Marquis made a thousand Apologies, that being a Batchelor, he could not accommodate her as he could the Gentlemen) was shewed to a Chamber, where some of the Maid Servants attended to put on dry Cloaths.

THEY were splendidly entertain'd that Night, and when Morning came, and they were preparing to take Leave, the Marquis, who was strangely charm'd with their Conversation, entreated them to stay two or three Days with him, to recover themselves of the Fatigue they had suffer'd. The Count's Impatience to be at *Paris*, to enquire after his dear *Melliora*, would never have permitted him to consent, if he had not been obliged to it, by being told that *Fidelio* was grown much worse, and not in a Condition to travel; *Frankville* and *Camilla* had said nothing, because they would not oppose the Count's Inclination, but were extreamly glad of an Opportunity to rest a little longer, tho' sorry for the Occasion.

The Marquis omitted nothing that might make their Stay agreeable; but tho' he had a longing Inclination to know the Names and Quality of his Guests, he forbore to ask, since he found they were not free to discover themselves: The Conversation between these accomplish'd Persons was extremely entertaining, and *Camilla*, tho' an
Italian,

Italian, spoke *French* well enough to make no inconsiderable Part of it; the Themes of their Discourse were various, but at last happening to mention Love, the Marquis spoke of that Passion so feelingly, and express'd himself so vigorously when he attempted to excuse any of those Errors it leads its Votaries into, that it was easy to discover, he felt the Influence he endeavour'd to represent.

NIGHT came on again, *Fidelio's* Distemper increas'd to that Degree, that they all began to despair of his Recovery, at least they could not hope it for a long Time, if at all; and Count *D'Elmont* fretted beyond measure at this unavoidable Delay of the Progress of his Journey to that Place, where he thought there was only a Possibility of hearing of *Melliora*: As he was in Bed, forming a thousand various Idea's, tho' all tending to one Object, he heard the Chamber Door unlock, and opening his Curtains, perceiv'd somebody come in; a Candle was burning in the next Room, and gave Light enough at the opening the Door, to shew it was a Woman, but what sort of one he could not discern, nor did he give himself the Trouble of asking who was there, believing it might be one of the Servants come in to fetch something she wanted; till coming pretty near the Bed, she cry'd twice in a low Voice, Are you asleep? No, answer'd he, a little surpriz'd at this Disturbance; what wou'd you have? I come (said she) to talk with you, and I hope you are more a Chevalier, than to prefer a little Sleep to the Conversation of a Lady, tho' she visits you at Midnight. These Words made *D'Elmont* believe he had met with a second *Ciamara*; and lest he should find the same Trouble with this as he had done with the former, he resolv'd to put a stop to it at once, and with an Accent as peevish as he could turn his Voice to, The Conversation of Ladies (reply'd he) is a Happiness I neither deserve, nor
much

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much desire at any time, especially at this ; therefore whoever you are, to oblige me, you must leave me to the Freedom of my Thoughts, which at present afford me Matter of Entertainment more suitable to my Humour than any thing I can find here ! Oh Heavens ! (said the Lady) is this the courtly, the accomplish'd Count *D'Elmont* ? so fam'd for Complaisance and Sweetness ? Can it be he, who thus rudely repels a Lady, when she comes to make him a Present of her Heart ? The Count was very much amaz'd to find he was known in a Place where he thought himself wholly a Stranger : I perceive (answer'd he, with more ill Humour, if possible, than before) you are very well acquainted with my Name, which I shall never deny (tho' for some Reasons, I conceal'd it) but not at all with my Character, or you would know, I can esteem the Love of a Woman, only when 'tis granted, and think it little worth Acceptance, proffer'd. Oh ! unkind (said she) but perhaps the Sight of me, may inspire you with Sentiments less cruel. With these Words she went hastily out of the Room to fetch the Candle she had left within ; and the Count was so much surpriz'd and vex'd at the Immodesty and Imprudence he believ'd her guilty of, that he thought he could not put a greater Affront upon her, than her Behaviour deserv'd, and turn'd himself with his Face the other Way, designing to deny her the Satisfaction of a Look. She return'd immediately, and having set down the Candle pretty near the Bed, came close to it herself ; and seeing how he was laid, This is unkind indeed (said she) 'tis but one Look I ask, and if you think me unworthy of another, I will for ever shun your Eyes : The Voice in which these Words were deliver'd (for those she spoke before were in a feign'd Accent) made the Heart-ravish'd *D'Elmont* turn to her indeed, with much more Haste than he had done to avoid her ; those dear, those

those well-remembred Sounds infus'd an Extacy, which none but *Melliora's* could create; he heard—he saw,—'twas she, that very she, whose Loss he had so much deplor'd, and began almost to despair of ever being able to retrieve! Forgetting all Decorum, he flew out of the Bed, catch'd her in his Arms, and almost stifled her with Kisses; which she returning with pretty near an equal Eagerness, You will not chide me from you now, she cry'd? Those who have experienc'd any part of that Transport *D'Elmont* now was in, will know it was impossible for him to give her any other Answer, than repeating his Caresses; Words were too poor to express what 'twas he felt, nor had he time to spare for Speech, employed in a far dearer, softer Oratory, than all the Force of Language could come up to.

BUT, when at last, to gaze upon her with more Freedom, he releas'd her from that strict Embrace he had held her in, and she blushing with downcast Eyes, began to reflect on the Effects of her unbounded Passion, a sudden Pang seiz'd on his Soul, and trembling, and convuls'd between Extremity of Joy and Extremity of Anguish, I find thee, *Melliora*, cry'd he; but, oh! my Angel; where is it thou art found?—In the House of the young amorous Marquis *De Sanguillier*! Cease, cease, interrupted she, your causeless Fears,—wherever I am found, I am,—I can be only yours——And if you will return to Bed, I will inform you, not only what Accident brought me hither, but also every Particular of my Behaviour since I came.

THESE Words first put the Count in Mind of the Indecency his Transport had made him guilty of, in being seen in that Manner, and was going hastily to throw on his Night-Gown, when *Melliora* perceiving his Intent, and fearing he would take cold, told him, she would not stay a Moment, unless he granted her Request, of returning

ing to his Bed ; which he, after having made her sit down on the Side of it, at last consented to ; And contenting himself with taking one of her Hands, and pressing it between his, close Prisoner in his Bosom, gave her Liberty to begin in this Manner, the Discovery she had promis'd.

AFTER the sad Accident of *Alonisa's* Death, (said she) at my Return to the Monastery I found a new Pensioner there ; it was the young *Madamoiselle Charlotte de Mexray*, who being lately left an Orphan, was entrusted to the Care of our Abbess, being her near Relation, till her time of Mourning was expired, and she should be married to this *Marquis De Sanguillier*, at whose House we are ; they were contracted by their Parents in their Infancy, and nothing but the sudden Death of her Mother, had put a Stop to the Consummation of what, then, they both wish'd with equal Ardor. But, alas ! Heaven, which decreed the little Beauty I am Mistress of should be pernicious to my own Repose, ordain'd it so, that this unfaithful Lover, seeing me one Day at the Grate with *Charlotta*, should fancy he found something in me more worthy of creating a Passion than he had in her, and began to wish himself releas'd from his Engagement with her, that he might have Liberty to enter into another, which, he imagin'd, would be more pleasing : Neither she, nor I had the least Suspicion of his Sentiments ; and we having commenc'd a very great Friendship, she wou'd for the most part, desire me to partake in the Visits he made her. He still continu'd to make the same Protestations of Affection to her as ever ; but if on any Occasion, she but turn'd her Head or cast her Eyes another Way, he would give me such Looks, as, tho' I then but little regarded, I have since understood the Meaning of but too well ; in this Manner he proceeded for some Weeks, till at last he came one Day extremely

treably out of Humour, and told *Charlotta* the Occasion of it was, that he had heard she gave Encouragement to some other Lover. She, amaz'd, as well she might, avow'd her Innocence, and endeavour'd to undeceive him ; but he, who resolv'd not to be convinc'd, at least not to seem as if he was, pretended to be more enrag'd at what he call'd weak Excuses ; said, he was satisfy'd she was more guilty, even than he could speak,—that he knew not if it were consistent with his Honour, ever to see her more—And, in short, behav'd himself in so unaccountable a Manner, that there was no room to doubt he was either the most impos'd on, or most base of Men. It would be endless for me to endeavour to represent poor *Charlotta's* Affliction ; so I shall only say, it was answerable to the Tenderness she had for him, which, could by nothing be exceeded, but by that, continued she, sighing and looking languishingly on him, which, contrary to all the Resolutions I had made, brings me to seek the Arms of my enchanting *D'Elmont*, to rouse Remembrance of his former Passion ! to strengthen my Idea in his Heart ! and influence him anew with Love and Softness ! This kind Digression made the Count give Truce to his Curiosity, that he might indulge the Raptures of his Love, and raising himself in Bed, and pressing her slender fine proportioned Body close to his, would permit her no otherwise, than in this Posture to continue her Discourse.

SEVERAL Days, resum'd *Melliora*, were past, and we hear nothing of the Marquis, all which, as he has told me, were spent in fruitless Projections to steal me from the Monastery ; but at last, by the means of a Lay-Sister, he found means to convey a Letter to me ; the Contents of it, as near as I can remember, were these.

To



To the Divine M E L L I O R A.

TIS not the Falshood of Charlotta, but the Charms of Melliora have produc'd this Change in my Behaviour: Do not therefore, at the reading this, affect a Surprise at Effects, which I am sure cannot be uncommon to such Excellence! Nor accuse an Inconstancy, which I rather esteem a Virtue than a Vice: To change from you indeed would be the highest Sin, as well as Stupidity: But to change for you, is what all must, and ought to do, who boast a Capacity of distinguishing. I love you, oh! Divinest Melliora! I burn, I languish for you in unceasing Torments, and you would find it impossible for you to condemn the Boldness of this Declaration, if you could be sensible of the Racks which force me to it, and which must shortly end me, if not happy enough to be received

Your Lover,

DE SANGUILLIER.

'Tis impossible for me to express the Grief and Vexation this Letter gave me; but I forbore shewing it to *Charlotta*, knowing how much it would increase her Anguish; And resolv'd when next I saw him, as I made no doubt but I should quickly do, to use him in such a Fashion, as, in spite of his Vanity, should make him know I was not to be won in such a manner; for I confess my dear *D'Elmont*, that his Temerity gave no less a Shock to my Pride, than his Infidelity to her I really lov'd, did to my Friendship. The next Day

Day I was told, a Gentleman enquired for me ; I presently imagined it was he, and went to the Grate, with a Heart full of Indignation: I was not deceived in my Conjecture ; it was indeed the Marquis, who appear'd on the other Side, but with so much Humility in his Eyes, and awful Fear, for what he saw in mine, as half disarm'd my Anger for what concerned myself ; and had his Passion not proceeded from his Inconstancy, I might have been drawn to pity what was not in my Power to reward ; but this base Usage of a Woman so deserving as *Charlotta*, made me express myself in Terms full of Disdain and Detestation ; and without allowing him to reply, or make any Excuses, pluck'd the Letter he had sent me out of my Pocket, with a Design to return it him, just at that Moment when a Nun came hastily to call me from the Grate : Somebody had overheard the Beginning of what I said, and had told the Abbess, who, tho' she was not displeas'd at what she heard of my Behaviour to him, yet she thought it improper for me to hold any Discourse with a Man, who declared himself my Lover : I did not, however, let her know who the Person was, fearing it should come to *Charlotta's* Ears, and increase an Affliction. which was already too violent : I was vex'd to miss the Opportunity of giving back his Letter, but kept it still about me, not in the least questioning, but that Boldness which had encourag'd him to make a Discovery of his Desires, would again lead him to the Prosecution of them in the same Manner ; but I was deceived, his Passion prompted him to take other, as he believ'd, more effectual Measures : One Day, at least a Fortnight after I had seen the Marquis, as I was walking in the Garden with *Charlotta*, and another young Pensioner, a Fellow who was employ'd in taking away Rubbish, told us there were some Statues carry'd by the Gate, which open'd into the Fields ; which were
the

the greatest Master-pieces of Art that had ever been seen; They are going (said he) to be plac'd in the *Sieur Valier's* Garden; if you step but out, you may get a Sight of them. We, who little suspected any Deceit, ran without Consideration, to satisfy our Curiosity; but instead of the Statues we expected to see, four living Men disguis'd, muffled, and well mounted, came galloping up to us, and, as it were, surrounded us, before we had Time to get back to the Gate we came out at: three of them alighting, seiz'd me and my Companions; and I, who was the destin'd Prey, was in a Moment thrown into the Arms of him who was on Horseback, and who no sooner receiv'd me, than, as if we had been mounted on a *Pegasus*, we seem'd rather to fly than ride! In vain I struggled, shriek'd, and cry'd to Heaven for Help; my Prayers were lost in Air, as quickly was my Speech; Surprise, and Rage, and Dread, o'erwhelm'd my sinking Spirits, and, unable to sustain the Rapidity of such violent Emotions, I fell into a Swoon, from which I recover'd not, till I was at the Door of some House, but where I yet am ignorant. The first thing I saw, when I open'd my Eyes, was one of those Men who had been assistant in my carrying away, and was now about to lift me from the Horse: I had not yet the Power to speak, but when I had, I vented all the Passions of my Soul in Terms of Distraction and Despair: By what Means the People of the House were gain'd to my Ravisher's Interest, I know not, but they took little Notice of the Complaints I made, or my Implorations for Succour: I had now not the least Shadow of a Hope that any thing but Death could save me from Dishonour; and having vainly rag'd, I at last sat down meditating by what Means I should compass that only Relief from the worse Ruin which seem'd to threaten me. While my Thoughts were thus employ'd, he who appear'd the chief of that

insolent

insolent Company, making a Sign that the rest should withdraw, fell on his Knees before me, and plucking off his Vizard, discover'd to me the Face of the Marquis *D'Saguillier*. Heavens! How did this Sight inflame me? Mild as I am by Nature, I that Moment was all Fury!——'Till now I had not the least Apprehension who he was, and believ'd 'twas rather my Fortune than my Person, which had prompted some daring Wretch to take this Method to obtain it; but now, my Woes appear'd, if possible, with greater Horror, and his Quality, and Engagement with *Charlotta* made the Act seem yet more base. I blame you not (said he) oh divinest *Melliora*! The Presumption I am guilty of, is of so high a Nature, as justly may deserve your utmost Rigour!—— I know, and confess my Crime; nay, hate myself for thus offending you.——But oh! 'tis unavoidable.——Be then like Heaven, who when injured most, takes most delight to pardon. Crimes unrepented, answer'd I, can have no Plea for Mercy; still to persist, and still to ask Forgiveness, is mocking of the Power we seem to implore, and but increases Sin.——Release me from this Captivity, which you have betray'd me into, restore me to the Monastery——And, for the future, cease to shock my Ears with Tales of violated Faith, detested Passion! Then I perhaps, may pardon what is past. His Reply to all this was very little to the Purpose, only I perceiv'd he was so far from complying with my Request, or repenting what he had done, that he resolv'd to proceed yet farther; and one of his Associates coming in, to tell him that his Chariot, which it seems, he had order'd to meet him there, was ready, he offer'd to take me by the Hand to lead me to it, which I refusing with an Air which testify'd the Indignation of my Soul; Madam (said he) you are not here less in my Power, than you will be

in a Place where I can accommodate you in a manner more suitable to your Quality, and the Adoration I have for you: If I were capable of a base Design on you, what hinders but I now might perpetrate it? But be assured, your Beauties are not of that kind, which inspire Sentiments dishonourable; nor shall you ever find any other Treatment from me, than what might become the humblest of your Slaves; my Love, fierce as it is, shall know its Limits, and never dare to breathe an Accent less chaste than your own Virgin Dreams, and innocent as your Desires.

THO' the Boldness he had been guilty of, and still persisted in, made me give but little Credit to the latter Part of his Speech, yet the Beginning of it awak'd my Consideration to a Reflection, that I could not indeed be any where in a greater Danger of the Violence I fear'd, than where I was; but, on the contrary, it might so happen, that in leaving that Place, I might possibly meet some Persons who might know me, or at least be carried somewhere, whence I might, with more Likelihood, make my Escape: In this last Hope, I went into the Chariot, and indeed, to do him Justice, neither in our Journey, nor since I came into his House, has he ever violated the Promise he made me; nothing can be with more Humility than his Addresses to me, never visiting me without first having obtained my Leave. But to return to the Particulars of my Story, I had not been here many Days, before a Servant-Maid of the House, being in my Chamber, doing something about me, ask'd me if it were possible I could forget her? The Question surpriz'd me, but I was much more so, when looking earnestly in her Face, which I had never done before, I perfectly distinguish'd the Features of *Charlotta*. Oh Heavens! (cry'd I) *Charlotta*! The very same (said she) but I dare not stay to unfold the Mystery, lest any of
the

the Family take notice ; at Night when I undress you, you shall know the History of my Transformation.

NEVER any Day seemed to me so long as that, and I feign'd myself indispos'd, and rung my Bell for some Body to come up, several Hours before the time I used to go to Bed. *Charlotta* guessing my Impatience, took care to be in the way, and as soon as she was with me, not staying for my requesting it of her, begun the Information she had promis'd, in this manner.

You see (said she, forcing herself to put on a Half Smile) your unhappy Rival follows to interrupt the Triumph of your Conquest ; but I protest to you, that if I thought you esteem'd my perjur'd Lover's Heart an Offering worth your Acceptance, I never would have disturbed your Happiness ; and 'tis as much the Hopes of being able to be instrumental in serving you in your Releasement, as the Prevention of that Blessing the injurious *D'Saguillier* aims at, which has brought me here : Of all the Persons that bewail'd your being carried away, I was the only one who had any Guess at the Ravisher ; nor had I been so wise, but that the very Day on which it happen'd, you drop'd a Letter, which I took up, and knowing it the *Marquis's* Hand, made no Scruple of reading it. I had no Opportunity to upbraid you for the Concealment of his Falshood ; but the manner of your being seiz'd convinc'd me you were innocent of favouring his Passion, and his Vizard slipping a little on one Side, as he took you in his arms, discover'd enough of that Face I have so much adored for me to know who it was, that had took this Method to gain you : I will not (continued she, weeping) trouble you with any Recital of what I endur'd from the Knowledge of my Misfortune, but you may judge it by my Love ; however, I bore up against the oppressive Weight,

and resolv'd to struggle with my Fate, even to the last ; I made an Excuse for leaving the Monastery the next Day, without giving any Suspicion of the Cause, or letting any Body into the Secret of the Marquis, and, disguis'd as you see, found means to be receiv'd by the House-keeper, as a Servant : I came here in three Days after you, and have had the Opportunity of being confirm'd by your Behaviour, of what I before believ'd, that you were far from being an Assistant in his Design.

HERB the sorrowful *Charlotta* finish'd her little Account, and I testify'd the Joy I felt in seeing her, by a thousand Embraces, and all the Protestations of Eternal Friendship to her, that I could make : All the times we had any Opportunity of talking to each other, were spent in forming Schemes for my Escape, but none of them appear'd feasible ; however, the very Contrivance was a Kind of Pleasure to me ; for tho' I began to banish all my Fears of the Marquis's offering any Violence to my Virtue, yet I found his Passion wou'd not permit him to suffer my Departure, and I was almost distracted when I had no Hopes of being in a Capacity of hearing from you, or writing to you : In this fashion, my dearest *D'Elmont* have I liv'd, sometimes flattering myself with vain Projects, sometimes desponding of being ever free : But last Night *Charlotta* coming up, according to her Custom, told me in a kind of Rapture, that you, and my Brother, were in the House ; she, it seems, knew you at *Paris*, while her Mother was yet living, and, to make her entirely easy as to the Marquis, I had now made her the Confidant of my Sentiments concerning you : I need not tell you the Extacy this News gave me ; you are too well acquainted with my Heart, not to be able to conceive it more justly than Language can express ; but I cannot forbear informing you of one thing, of which
you

you are ignorant ; 'tho had Prudence any Share in my Love-directed Soul, I should conceal it : My Impatience to behold you, was almost equal to my Joy to think you were so near, and transported with my eager Wishes, by *Charlotta's* Assistance, I last Night found the Way into your Chamber : I saw you, oh *D'Elmont* ! My longing Eyes enjoy'd the Satisfaction they so much desir'd ; but yours were clos'd : the Fatigue of your Journey had laid you fast asleep, so fast, that even Fancy was unactive, and no kind Dream alarm'd you with one Thought of *Melliora* !

SHE cou'd not pronounce these last Words very intelligibly, the greedy Count devour'd 'em as she spoke ; and tho' Kisses had made many a Parenthesis in her Discourse, yet he restrain'd himself as much as possible, for the Pleasure of hearing her ; but perceiving she was come to a Period, he gave a loose to all the furious Transports of his ungovern'd Passion : A while their Lips were cemented ! rivetted together with Kisses ; such Kisses ! as collecting every Sense in one, exhale the very Soul, and mingle Spirits ! Breathless with Bliss, then would they pause and gaze, then join again with Ardour still increasing, and Looks, and Sighs, and straining Grasps were all the Eloquence that either cou'd make use of : Fain wou'd he now have obtain'd the Aim of all his Wishes ; strongly he press'd, and faintly she repuls'd : Dissolv'd in Love, and melting in his Arms, at last she found no Words to form Denials, while he, all Fire, improv'd the lucky Moment : A Thousand Liberties he took——A Thousand Joys he reap'd, ——and had infallibly been possess'd of all, if *Charlotta*, who seeing it broad Day, had not wonder'd at *Melliora's* Stay, and came and knock'd at the Chamber Door, which not being fasten'd, gave way to her Entrance ; but she made no such haste, but that they had time enough to disengage

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them-

themselves from that close Embrace they had held each other in: Heavens! *Melliora*, cry'd the careful Interrupter, what mean you by this Stay, which may be so prejudicial to our Designs? the Marquis is already stirring, and if he should come into this Room, or send to yours, what might be the Consequence? I come, I come, said *Melliora*, alarm'd at what she heard, and rising from the Bed-side: Oh, you will not, said the Count, in a Whisper, and tenderly pressing her Hand, you must not leave me thus! A few Hours hence answer'd she aloud, I hope to have the Power to own myself all yours; nor can the Scheme we have laid fail of the Effects we wish, if no Discovery happens to postpone it: She was going with *Charlotta* out of the Chamber, with these Words, but remembering herself, she turn'd hastily back, Let not my Brother, resum'd she, know my Weakness, and when you see me next, feign a Surprise equal to his own.

It is not to be suppos'd that after she was gone, *D'Elmont*, tho' kept awake so long, could suffer any Sleep to enter his Eyes; Excess of Joy, of all the Passions, hurries the Spirits most, and keeps 'em longest busy'd: Anger or Grief rage violently at first, but quickly flag, and sink at last into a Lethargy; but Pleasure warms, exhilarates the Soul, and every rapturous Thought infuses new Desires, new Life, and added Vigour.

THE Marquis *D'Saguillier* was no less happy in Imagination than the Count, and it was the Force of that Passion which had rouz'd him so early that Morning, and made him wait impatiently for his Guests coming out of their Chambers, for he would not disturb them: As soon as they were all come into the Drawing Room, I know not, Messieurs, said he, with a Voice and Eyes wholly chang'd from those he wore the Day before, whether you have ever experienc'd the Force

of

of Love to that Degree that I have, but I dare believe you have Generosity enough to rejoice in the good Fortune I am going to be possess'd of; and when I shall inform you how I have long languish'd in a Passion, perhaps the most extravagant that ever was, you will confess the Justice of that God, who soon or late, seldom suffers his faithful Votaries to miss their Reward. The Count could not force himself to a Reply to these Words, but *Frankville* and *Camilla*, who were entirely ignorant of the Cause of them, heartily congratulated him. I am confident, resum'd the Marquis, that Despair has no Existence but in weak and timorous Minds: all Women may be won by Force or Stratagem; and tho' I had almost invincible Difficulties to struggle with, Patience, Constancy, and a bold and artful Management has at length surmounted them: Hopeless by distant Courtship to obtain the Heart of my Adorable, I found Means to make myself Master of her Person, and by making no other Use of the Power I had over her, than humbly sighing at her Feet, convinc'd her my Designs were far from being dishonourable; and last Night, looking on me with more Kindness than she ever had done before, My Lord, said she, your Usage of me has been too noble, not to vanquish whatever Sentiments I may have been possess'd with to your Prejudice; therefore since you have Company in the House, who may be Witness of what I do, I think I cannot chuse a fitter Time than this, to bestow myself, before them, on him who most deserves me. I will not now continu'd he, delay the Confirmation of my Happiness so long, as to go about to describe the Extacy I felt, for this so wish'd, and so unhop'd a Condescension; but when, hereafter, you shall be told the whole History of my Passion, you will be better able to conceive it. The Marquis had scarce done speaking, when his Chaplain came

into the Room, saying, he believ'd it was the Hour his Lordship order'd him to attend: It is! it is! cry'd the transported Marquis. Now, my worthy Guests, you shall behold the lovely Author of my Joys; with these Words he left them, but immediately return'd, leading the intended Bride. Monsieur *Frankville*, tho' he had not seen his Sister in some Years, knew her at the first Glimpse, and the Surprize of meeting her——meeting her in so unexpected a Manner, was so great, that his Thoughts were quite confounded with it, and he cou'd no otherwise expresse it, than by throwing his Eyes wildly sometimes on her, sometimes on the Count and sometimes on the Marquis; the Count, tho' appriz'd of this, felt a Consternation for the Consequence, little inferior to his, and both being kept silent by their different Agitations, and the Marquis also, by the sudden Change, which he perceiv'd in their Countenances, *Melliora* had Liberty to explain herself in this Manner: I have kept my Word, my Lord, said she to the Marquis: this Day shall give me to him who best deserves me; but who that is, my Brother and Count *D'Elmont* must determine; since Heaven has restor'd them to me, all Power of disposing of myself must cease; 'tis they must henceforth rule the Will of *Melliora*, and only their Consent can make me yours. All Endeavours would be vain to represent the Marquis's Confusion at this sudden Turn, and 'tis hard to say whether his Astonishment or Vexation was greatest; her Brother he wou'd little have regarded, not doubting but his Quality, and the Riches he was possess'd of, wou'd easily have gain'd his Compliance; but Count *D'Elmont*, tho' he knew him not (having, for some Disgust he receiv'd at Court, been many Years from *Paris*) yet he had heard much Talk of him; and the Passion he had for *Melliora*, by the Adventure of *Alovisa's* Death, had made too
great

great a Noise in the World not to have reach'd his Ear ; he stood speechless for some time, but when he had a little recover'd himself ; Have you then deceiv'd me, Madam, said he ? No answer'd she, I am still ready to perform my Promise, whenever these Gentlemen shall command me.—The one my Brother, the other my Guardian, obtain but their Consent, and—Mine he can never have, interrupted *Frankville* hastily, and laying his Hand on his Sword. Nor mine, cry'd the Count, while I have Breath to form Denials, or my Arm Strength to Guard my Beauteous Charge. Hold, Brother,—Hold, my Lord, said *Melliora*, fearing their Fury wou'd produce some fatal Effects, the *Marquis* has been so truly Noble, that you rather ought to thank, than resent his Treatment of me ; and tho' I see Rage in *your* Eyes, and all the Stings of Disappointment glowing fierce in *his*, yet I have Hopes, a general Content may crown the End—Appear ! continu'd she, raising her Voice, appear ! thou lovely faithful Maid ! Come forth and charm thy roving Lover's Heart again to Constancy, to Peace, and Thee ! She had no sooner spoke, than *Charlotte* entred, dress'd like a Bride indeed, in a Suit of Cloaths, which she had brought with her, in case any happy Opportunity shou'd arise for her to discover herself. If the *Marquis* was before confounded, how much more so was he now ? That injur'd Lady's Presence, just at this Juncture, and the Surprise by what means she came there, made him utterly unable to resolve on any thing ; which she observing, and taking Advantage of his Confusion, run to him, and catching hold of his Hand ; Wonder not, my Lord (said she) to see *Charlotte* here ; nothing is impossible to Love like mine ; tho' slighted and abandon'd by you, still I pursue your Steps with Truth, with Tenderness, and Constancy untir'd !——Then perceiving he still was silent, Come, my Lord, continu'd she, you must

must at last take Pity on my Sufferings ; my Rival, charming as she is, wants a just Sensibility of your Deserts, and is by that less worthy than I : Oh, then remember, if not to me, what 'tis you owe your self, your own exalted Merits, and you will soon determine in my Favour, and confess that she, who loves you best, ought to be best beloved. She spoke these Words in so moving an Accent, and they were accompany'd with so many Tears, that the most rocky Heart must have relented ; and that the Marquis was sensibly touch'd with 'em, his Countenance testified, when sighing, and turning his Head a little away, not with Disdain, but Remorse for the Infidelity he had been guilty of : Oh cease (said he) this Flood of Softness, it gives me Pains I never felt before, for 'tis impossible you can forgive — Oh Heaven ! cry'd the transported *Charlotta*, all you have done, or even can do of Unkindness, is by one tender Word made full Amends for ; see at your Feet (continued she, falling on her Knees) thus in this humble Posture, which best becomes my prostrate Soul, I beg you to accept the Pardon which I bring, to banish from your Mind all Thoughts that you have injured me, and leave it free for all those generous Joys, the making others happy, must create. This Action of *Charlotta's*, join'd to the Reflection, how strangely every thing happen'd to prevent his Designs on the other, won him entirely, and raising her with a tender Embrace, put it out of her Power to regret his ever being False, since his Return gave her a Taste of Joys, which are not but in Reconciliation to be found.

THE Count, Monsieur *Frankville*, and the two Ladies who had waited all this while in an impatient Expectation for the End of this Affair, now paid their several Congratulations, all highly applauding the Constancy of *Charlotta*, and the timely Repentance of the Marquis : These

Ceremo-

Ceremonies being over, the Marquis desir'd *Charlotta* to acquaint him by what means she had gain'd Admittance to his House unknown to him; which Curiosity she immediately satisfying, engag'd a-new the Praises of the whole Company, and more endear'd herself to her beloved Marquis's Affections.

TRANQUILITY now reign'd in those Hearts, which lately heav'd with various and disturb'd Emotions, and Joy sat smiling upon every Cheek, entirely happy in their several Wishes: They could now talk of past Woes with Pleasure, and began to enter into a very delightful Conversation, when *Frankville* on a sudden missing *Camilla*, and asking for her, one of the Servants told him she was gone to the sick Page's Chamber: This News gave him some little Alarm, and the rather, because he had observ'd she express'd a more than ordinary Tendernefs and Care for this Page all the Time of their Journey; he ran immediately to the Room where he heard she was, and found her lying on the Bed, with her Arms round *Fidelio's* Neck, and her Face close to his: This shocking Sight had certainly driven the Rashness of his Temper to commit some Deed of Horror, if the Amazement he was in had not prevented it; he drew his Sword half out, but then, as if some Spell had charm'd his Arm, remain'd in that Posture, fix'd and motionless as Marble: *Camilla*, half blinded with the Tears which fell from her Eyes, saw not the Confusion he was in, nor consider'd the seeming Reason he had to be so, but raising her Head a little to see who it was that came into the Chamber, Oh, *Frankville*! said she, see here the Ruins of Love, behold the Tyranny of that fatal Passion in this expiring Fair! but haste, continu'd she, finding him ready to faint, let Count *D'Elmont* know, the faithful, generous *Violetta*! dies—— she dies for him, and asks no other Recompence,
than

than a last Farewell——*Violetta*! interrupted *Frankville*, what means *Camilla*? This, is *Violetta*, resum'd she, who like a Page disguis'd, has follow'd the too lovely Count, and lost herself: The Rage which at his first Entrance had possess'd the Heart of *Frankville*, now gave Way to Grief, and coming near the Bed, he began to testify it, by all the Marks which an unfeign'd Concern cou'd give; but this unfortunate Language, finding her Strength decay, prevented him from making any long Speeches, by renewing that Request which *Camilla* had already made known, of seeing her dear Lord before she died, which *Frankville* making haste to fulfil; she call'd to him as loud as her Weakness would permit, to come back, and as soon as he was, *Camilla* (said she) has inform'd me of my Lord's good Fortune in meeting with the Charmer of his Soul; I would not deprive him of a Moment's Happiness. I therefore beg she'd give a dying Rival leave to wish her Joy; and as neither my Death, nor the Cause of it can be a Secret to any of the Company here, I desire they all may be Witnesses, with what Pleasure I welcome it. *Frankville*, fiery as he was, had a vast deal of Compassion in his Nature, and could not see so beautiful a young Lady, and one who he had so many Obligations to, on the Account of his Affair with *Camilla*, in this despairing and dying Condition, without being seiz'd with an Anguish inexpressible; but all the Pangs he felt were nothing when compar'd to those he gave *D'Elmont* in the Delivery of her Message; he ran into the Room like a Man distracted, and in the Hurry of his Grief forgot even the Complaisance he ow'd to *Melliora*; but she was too generous to disapprove his Concern, and immediately followed with her Brother, the Marquis and *Charlotta*: What is it that I hear, Madam? cry'd the Count, throwing himself on the Bed by her:

her: Can it be possible that the admir'd *Violetta* cou'd forsake her Father,——Country,——Friends,—forego her Sex's Pride,——the Pomp of Beauty,—gay Dresses, and all the Equipage of State and Grandeur to follow in a mean Disguise, a Man unworthy her Thoughts? Oh! no more (said she) weeping, you are but too, too worthy Admiration; nor do I yet believe my Love a Crime, tho' the Consequence is so: I might in *Rome* with Honour and Innocence have died, but by my shameful Flight, I was the Murderer of my Father——that——that's a Guilt which all these Floods of Penitence can never wash away——Yet, bear me Witness, Heaven, how little I suspected the sad Event, when first unable to support your Absence, I contriv'd this Way, unknown, to keep for ever in your Sight: I lov'd, 'tis true, but if one unchaste Wish, or an impure Desire e'er stain'd my Soul, then may the purging Fire to which I am going, miss its Effect, my Spots remain, and not one Saint vouchsafe to own me! Here the Force of her Passion, agitating her Spirits with too much Violence for the Weakness of her Body, she sunk fainting in her Bed: And tho' the Count and *Camilla* felt the most deeply her Afflictions, the one because they proceeded from her Love to him, and the other as having long been her Friend, and Partner of her Secrets, yet those in the Company who were most Strangers to her, participated in her Sufferings, and commiserated the Woes they could not heal; and as soon as she recovered her Swoon, the generous *Melliora* (not in the least possess'd with any of those little Jealousies, which Women of narrow Souls harbour on such Occasions) came nearer to the Bed, and taking her kindly by the Hand, Live and be comforted, said she; a Love so innocent shall never give me a Disquiet.——Live and enjoy the Friendship of my Lord; and if you please to favour me with
yours,

yours, I shall esteem it as it deserves, a Blessing. No, Madam, answered the now almost expiring *Violetta*, Life, after this shameful Declaration, wou'd be the worst of Punishments; but not to be ungrateful to so generous an Offer, for a few Moments I accept it, and like Children placing their darling Play-things on their Pillow, and then contented to go to sleep, so I wou'd keep your Lord, would view him still while I awake to Life, then drop insensibly into a Slumber of eternal Peace. This mournful Tenderness pierced *D'Elmont* to the very Soul; and putting his Arm gently under her Head, which he perceiv'd she was too weak to raise when she endeavour'd it, and laying his Face on one of her Hands, could not forbear washing it in Tears; she felt the cordial Drops, and, as if they gave her a new Vigour, exerting her Voice to the Utmost of her Strength, This is too kind, said she; I can now feel none of those Agonies which render Death the King of Terrors; and thus, thus happy in your Sight,—your Touch,—your tender Pity,——I can but be translated from one Heaven to another; and yet, forgive me, Heaven, if it be a Sin, I could wish, methinks, to know no other Paradise than you, to be permitted to hover round you, to form your Dreams, to sit upon your Lips all Day, to mingle with your Breath, and glide in unfelt Air into your Bosom:—She would have proceeded, but her Voice faltered in the Accent, and all she spoke distinguishable was, Oh *D'Elmont*! receive in this one Sigh my latest Breath——It was indeed her last, she died that Moment, died in his Arms, whom more than Life she priz'd; and sure there are none who have liv'd in the Anxieties of Love, who would not envy such a Death!

THERE was not in this noble Company, one whose Eyes were dry; but Count *D'Elmont* was for some Time inconsolable, even by *Melliora*; he

he forbore the celebrating of his so eagerly desired Nuptials, as did the Marquis and Monsieur *Frankville* theirs, in Complaisance to him, 'till after *Violetta* was interr'd, which the Count took care shou'd be in a Manner becoming her Quality, her Merit, and the Esteem he profess'd to have borne her. But when this melancholy Scene was past, a Day of Joy succeeded, and one happy Hour confirm'd the Wishes of the three longing Bridegrooms; the Weddings were all kept in a splendid Manner at the Marquis's, and it was not without a great deal of Reluctance, that he and *Charlotta* suffer'd the Count, Monsieur *Frankville*, and their Ladies to take leave of them. When they came to *Paris*, they were joyfully received by the Chevalier *Brilliant* and *Ansellina*; and those who in the Count's Absence, had taken a Liberty of censuring and condemning his Actions, aw'd by his Presence, and in Time won by his Virtues, now swell his Praises with an equal Vehemence: Both he and *Frankville* are still living, bless'd with a numerous and hopeful Issue, and continue, with their fair Wives, great and lovely Examples of conjugal Affection.

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